UP Newsfeatures

The Automobile Versus the Train

3-2-1958

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

On a July day in 1892, at Springfield, Mass., Charles Duryea flung open his shed doors and out rolled the first American-made motor carriage. This pioneer car set in motion the gasoline age and revived life on the old turnpike, the National Road.

Duryea's auto looked like a carriage, but he proudly called it an automobile. Weighing only 750 pounds, it had two forward speeds and one reverse. A coughing four cycle engine chugged it along. Barnum and Bailey's circus, ever on the alert for freaks, exhibited a Duryea model in 1896, when the car was in production, which meant building twelve Duryeas a year!

Soon other makes of automobiles were being manufactured. Avid customers, the highway's first daredevils, snapped up 2,500 Oldsmobiles in 1902. Then in 1909, Henry Ford introduced his Model T, the famous Tin Lizzie. It first sold for $950, but by 1913 was reduced to $550.

Dorothy J. Clark

Slowly the states through which the old pike ran, appropriated money and set road gangs to work. Their twentieth century machinery was primitive, but at least the days of pick and shovel repair were almost over. With each improvement came more traffic. The early tourist wrapped in linen duster and wearing goggles, took a lot of punishment. At first he carried his spare gasoline in tin cans. Soon, a few blacksmiths and drugstores sold fuel. If a motorist ran out of gas at night, he had to wait until morning for the merchants to open stores. His machine came equipped with a whipsocket, but no whip, a concession to horse and buggy days. A driver lighted his headlights with a match, patched his own tires, and when stuck in the mud, hired a farmer to pull him out.

Met Opposition.

In Pennsylvania irate farmers organized an Anti-Automobile Association and published their rules for drivers: 1. Automobiles traveling country roads at night must send up rockets every mile, then wait ten minutes for the road to clear. The driver may then proceed, with caution, blowing his horn and shooting off Roman candles as before; 2. If the driver of an automobile sees a team of horses approaching he is to stop, pulling over to one side of the road, and covering his machine with a blanket or dust cover which is painted or colored to blend with the scenery and thus renders the machine less noticeable; 3. In case a horse is unwilling to pass an automobile on the road, the driver of the car must take the machine apart as rapidly as possible, and conceal the parts in the bushes.

Long-distance motoring demanded careful planning in those days. First the car was overhauled, and put in perfect condition. Then the cautious driver laid in spare parts—three spark plugs, eight feet of high-tension cable, eight feet of low-tension cable and an extra valve and springs. He looked to see that he had not forgotten tire chains, extra cross-chains, jack, cutting pliers, extra tire casings, inner tubes and casing patches. A shovel and rope came in handy when the car stuck in sand or mud. If he intended to camp along the way, he packed bacon, coffee and canned goods. Many an auto camper pitched a tent and lighted a fire where countless movers had unyoked oxen and stopped their Conestoga wagons.

By 1923 the road was paved from Indianapolis to Plainfield and surfaced on to Terre Haute with only a few gaps here and there. Thousands of speed-crazy Americans now drove cars. One out of every six persons in Indiana owned an auto in 1923. Despite warning signs and regardless of traffic signals—called "silent policemen" in the twenties—the accident and death rate soared. Once stage coaches turned over; now it was automobiles.

Auto Racing.

Racing began in Indiana when the auto industry was in its infancy. The giant speedway at Indianapolis grew out of a bicycle course laid down when wheeling was the great American pastime. Old timers along the pike remember a more informal contest. They relish the true yarn of the race between Patrick Dailey and Harry McGee about 1913.

Farmers got ready for it early in the morning. By midday they lined the National Road between Indianapolis and Terre Haute. Their wives and children filled carriages and sat on straw-covered wagon beds. In the cities, sports, splendid in pinchback coats, peg-top trousers and pointed-toed shoes, placed bets. Even residents of Putnamville and Shady Garden made up purses.

The coming race was more than a competition between an automobile and a train. This speed contest of 1913 was a grudge fight between two types of transportation, but even more, it was a bitter professional feud between McGee, automobile driver extraordinary, and Dailey, crack engineer of the Pennsylvania flier on the 72-mile run between the two cities. The Irish engineer boasted that nothing on wheels could beat a train with an able crew and a strong-backed fireman, who knew how to spread coal. As for an automobile traveling faster than a train, why, that was nonsense.

McGee did not agree. He knew cars. After listening to Dailey's boasting, he finally lost his patience. Dailey snapped at McGee's challenge. Plans were drawn, judges were appointed and every detail was arranged. Train and Cadillac left Indianapolis precisely at the same moment. Railroad supporters crowded the coaches. Automobile enthusiasts parked along the road and behind McKinley Inn west of Putnamville, where legend said Lincoln once hung his hat.

Rough Going.

Spectators caught only a fleeting glimpse of the contestants flashing by. Dailey's engine throwing spirals of white smoke and McGee's Cadillac weighted down with sandbags and a giant Negro. Every time McGee hit a bump—the road was full of them—the Negro jounced into the air, so that delighted observers saw daylight between him and the sandbags which he was vainly trying to keep in place.

At Terre Haute men fingered their watches. Dailey was never late. They kept an eye cocked on the National Road, too. McGee was known as a determined driver. A dot showed on the highway at the same time the tracks began to hum. The Pennsylvania was coming down the rails, flashing by fields and telegraph poles. A great roar went up from the crowd. Then McGee took the last turn, skidded to a stop and stepped onto the station platform in plenty of time to greet a crestfallen engineer. The Cadillac had made the 72 miles in 72 minutes.

This is only one of the many stories to be told about the old National Road, especially the part that runs through Indiana, and from the eastern to the western city limits of Terre Haute.

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Flat Boat Cargo Brought High Prices to Valley

Clark, Dorothy.

T.H. Trib.-Star 4/14/68.

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The "Emigrants and Travelers' Guide" of 1832 said: "Hundreds of flat-boats annually descend the Wabash and White rivers . . . the trade of the Wabash river is becoming immense. In 1831, during the period between March 5th and April 16th, fifty-four steamboats arrived and departed from Vincennes. It is also estimated that at least one thousand flat-boats entered the Ohio from the Wabash in the same time."

This writer tells us that one-tenth of the flat-boats, according to estimate, were loaded with pork at the rate of 300 barrels to the boat"—another tenth said to be loaded with lard, cattle, horses, oats, cornmeal, etc., and the remainder with corn on the ear. The value of produce and stock sent annually to market from the Wabash Valley by flat-boats was estimated by one authority at nearly $1,000,000.

Early settlers developed the flat-boat when the French and Indian type canoes, bateaux (or flat-bottomed board boats) and pirogues made of logs hollowed out were used so successfully on the Wabash River.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

The flat-boat was essentially a forest product, and it would be very difficult to find the enormous trees now that were required for the sides, which were the foundations of the boat.

Col. Cockrum described the flat-boat construction as follows: To make one of these boats was quite an undertaking. The first thing to do was to procure two gunwales. They were usually made out of large yellow poplar trees and were from 60 to 80 feet in length. A fine, large straight tree was selected, and, after it was cut down, two faces of it were hewn, leaving it about 24 inches thick. Then it was turned down on large logs and split in halves, hewn down to 12 to 15 inches in thickness, thus making both the gunwales out of one tree.

The two ends were sloped, from six to eight feet, so that when the bottom was on, it had a boat shape, enabling it to run much faster in the water. The gunwales were then hauled to the boatyard and placed on rollers. The distance apart which was wanted for the width of the boat was usually from 14 to 16 feet.

Strong sills or girders were framed into the gunwales every eight or ten feet and securely fastened there by strong pins. Small girders or sleepers, to receive the bottom of the boat, were pinned into the cross sills or girders every 18 inches and even with the bottom of the gunwales.

The bottom was made of one-and-a-half-inch lumber the length to reach from outside to outside of the gunwales, where it was securely nailed and then caulked. The old Indiana flat-boat builders used hemp for caulking, placing it into the cracks between the edges of the planks with a caulking chisel made for the purpose.

Ready for Launching

When this was done, another bottom of inch lumber was made over this that held the caulking in place and made the bottom stronger. When the bottom was finished, it was ready for launching.

This was done by having large auger holes in the round logs the bottom rested on and turning them with hand spikes. The ground was always sloping toward the river and it did not require much turning until the logs would roll down the slope and carry the boat into the water. The boat, having been made bottom-upward, had to be turned. A large amount of mud and dirt was piled on the edge of the bottom, which was intended to sink it. Then a check line was fastened to the farthest limb or the fork of a tree and two or three yoke of oxen hitched to it.

When everything was ready, the boat was turned right side up. It was then full of water which had to be bailed out. The upper framework for the body of the boat was made very securely and well braced and the siding was nailed on. Strong joists were put on top of the framework from side to side to hold the decking. A center girder ran lengthwise of the boat and this rested on a post every six or eight feet. This girder was a little higher than the outer walls, so that the water would run off the deck.

A strong post was fastened in a framework made on the false bottom which came up through the decking about three feet near each end of the boat. Holes were bored in these check posts so that it could be turned around with long wooden spikes. The check rope was securely fastened to these posts and one end of it was carried to the bank and fastened. By using the spikes the check post would take up the slack and the boat could be securely landed as near the bank as wanted.

There were three long oars; blade on the end and was fastened to a post near the back of the boat. This oar was used as a rudder in guiding the direction of the boat. The other two oars were used as sweeps to propel the boat and to pull her out of eddies.

Cargo Highly Priced

This crudely-fashioned boat would carry a large amount of produce. The pork was usually packed in the boat in bulk; flour, wheat and corn were stored on raised floors to keep them dry. On small rivers when the water was at flood tide, 200,000 pounds of pork, 1,000 bushels of corn and many other articles of produce could be carried.

The money paid for the produce to load the boats brought great prosperity to the country. On the lower Mississippi, where the great sugar plantations were, there was a great demand for this provision. A boat would tie to the bank near one of these immense plantations and would sell the owner a half boat-load of meat, corn and flour.

It took one of these boats a month to run out of the Wabash River down to New Orleans. They would sell their load of produce and then sell the boat. These old boatmen were a jolly generous light-hearted set of men and would often lash their boats together and float for several days and nights in that way on the lower Mississippi River.

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Clark, Dorothy.

Last Steamboat Captain Remembered the Wabash

T.H. Trib-Star 7/21/68

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

When Emmet Hall, pioneer river captain, was interviewed by a local reporter over 40 years ago, he was quoted as saying, "Yes sirree, I'm the only river captain alive in these diggin's."

He was 72 years old at that time and could have passed easily for 50. Described as being broad-shouldered, tall, keen-eyed and interesting, his was a personality that anyone would admire. At seven score years he was hale and hearty, and had a booming voice that still spoke with authority.

The old captain started working on the river in 1861, at the tender age of eight years, on his father's boat, the "ANNA BELLE" which was a freight boat that ran from Vincennes to Terre Haute.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

Young Emmet had the job of washing dishes, but had aspirations of some day following in his father's footsteps and being a river captain.

He also worked on the Reindeer, Young America, Elk, Peter J. Clarke, H. O. Beam, Prairie City, Belle-Fontaine, and Belgrade boats.

According to Mr. Hall, the best boat that was ever up the Wabash was the old Romeo. She belonged to Capt. Uriah Shumaker, father of Samuel Shumaker of this city. It was built before 1858, because there is a picture of the steamboat Romeo leaving the foot of Walnut street, here in Terre Haute in June, 1858, with a Sunday School Excursion.

In 1867, according to the records, the old Romeo was carrying freight and passengers between Terre Haute and Covington.

Four-Dollar Fare

Mr. Hall was the proud captain of the newer Romeo, 130 feet long, 30 feet wide, and built in 1885 at the cost of over fifteen thousand dollars, a stupendous sum to spend on a steamboat at that time. The boat had 38 state rooms and a full cabin. It was considered a wonderful boat to the people up and down the Wabash river.

Theater and dancing parties were held on the boat and people came from Vincennes to Terre Haute on the railroad in order to take the boat from here back to Vincennes for four dollars.

Sometimes as many as 65 landings were made between Terre Haute and Vincennes, including Russellville, Merom, and Hutsonville. In the winter many times the river would be frozen up and so the crew would all camp on the river bank until the river was navigable.

In the winter of 1885 the boat left Vincennes at nine o'clock in the morning, landed in Terre Haute at sundown, and as the next day was New Year's, an all-night dance was held.

The Romeo was so well-known for its pleasure excursions that when the boat pulled in at Terre Haute approximately 2,000 people were on the bank to see her.

The old Romeo burned on the Yazoo River in Mississippi, in 1888. The last boat on which he was captain was an excursion boat on the Ohio River in 1923.

Mr. Hall had lived in Terre Haute since 1886 and came here from Darwin, Illinois. He was born in Clark County, Illinois, but he became a real honest-to-goodness Hoosier.

Back in 1925, Mr. Hall was quoted as saying, "It makes me hot to look at the foot of Ohio street and see that boat landing; to look at the banks of our river. What do you suppose tourists think when they see the banks of the Wabash as they are, when they expect to see it as they have heard in song or story?"

Serving on the committee for river improvements for which H. E. Perry was chairman, Mr. Hall's fondest hope was that Dresser Drive would be made beautiful and the river improved until it would be in reality what we hear of it in song, especially Paul Dresser's "On the Banks of the Wabash."

There have been many changes in river transportation and even in the river itself. The first bridge at the foot of Ohio street was provided with a swinging section on pontoons which could be opened to allow passage of steamboats.

The Terre Haute drawbridge had a lift-span which opened but in time became useless when the channel shifted toward the eastern bank. This can be seen as you look at the present Big Four bridge. The position of the drawspan indicates the chan-

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nel has shifted from the west to the east end of the bridge. No provision is made on our present bridge for the passage of steamboats, and if one should whistle for the opening of the draw, it would prove very embarrassing for all concerned.

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CLARK, Dorothy) TRIB-STAR 4-27-69

Safety on Wheels Has Progressed Since 1865

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

It was Britain in 1865 that made the first move to promote safety on wheels. This was the Locomotive Act, under which any powered vehicle in motion had to be accompanied by three people at least, one of whom had to walk 60 yards in front, carrying a red flag by day, or a red lamp by night; speed of the vehicle to be no more than four miles per hour in the country, half that in towns.

This state of affairs continued until 1878, when the clause concerning the flag was repealed, but a man was required to walk ahead at the reduced distance of 20 yards. Motoring as we were to know it began in 1896 at a maximum of 12 miles per hour by law.

Meanwhile, the Germans and the French and the Americans had been romping ahead enjoying themselves, except in Pennsylvania where a body calling itself "The Farmers' Anti-Motoring Society" made their own rule that "if the driver of an automobile sees a team of horses approaching, he is to stop, pulling over to the side of the road, and cover his machine with a blanket or dust cover which is painted or colored to blend into the scenery, and thus render the machine less noticeable."

Dorothy Clark

Because of the diversity of the earliest designs it was some time before passengers knew where they were to sit when offered a lift or a "spin," as it was called in those days.

A passenger in the Gottlieb Daimler of 1886 sat in the back seat astride the one-horsepower engine! In the Leon Bollee of 1897 the driver sat in the rear seat because the controls were located there, and the brave passenger sat in front of him, probably screaming "Look out!" at regular intervals.

Several of the other early makes, Lutzman, Star, Fiat, etc., had the passengers not only ahead of the driver but facing aft, possibly to reduce the unwanted advice given to the driver. But the passengers were gradually edging their way behind the driver, first sideways and facing one another, then eventually lined up behind him like sparrows on telephone wires, bellowing in his ear and prodding him between the shoulder blades.

Another danger to the driver of these earliest cars was tiller steering which designers all too often placed on a column between driver and passenger. Imagine the life and death struggles arising from this arrangement as a brakeless wonder hurtled downhill at a giddy 15, even 18 miles per hour. Obviously the surviving drivers reasoned with the manufacturers and the steering device was uprooted and replaced firmly in the position it holds today in front of the driver.

Fence Wire Handy

Instruments were scarce originally and drivers depended to a great extent on hearing and sight to warn them against mechanical disaster. In those early days spare parts, garages and skilled mechanics didn't exist, and gasoline could only be purchased in small bottles from chemist's shops. Frequently a length of fence wire was used to hold together the infernal machine until more expert help could be found.

By the early 1900s the automobiles had such do-it-yourself gear as hand pumps for fuel pressure and oil supply, advance and retard ignition, foot-operated warning bells as well as bulb horns, gear lever quadrants the size of bear traps, etc. There was no time for boredom. Nowadays you don't have even a running board on which to sit down and consider what to do next.

Brakes developed from rim and-or spoon right up to discs. Back in 1896 the die-hards jeered at Mr. Dunlop's pneumatic tires, but what an invention that was!

It is all too easy to forget that until the turn of the century the gasoline engine had not yet established itself against the claims of the steamer and the electric car. The first practical steamer emerged in 1894 in America, built by the Stanley Bros. who by 1903 had developed it to the point where its supporters felt it had a 50-50 chance with the gas engine.

But they were too late. With the help from vested interests such as the oil companies the gasoline engine had taken the public fancy. The Stanley Bros. continued to build Steamers until the mid-twenties. Their belief in steam is continued by the recent appearance of a Volswagen with a very compact little steam engine in place of the flat-four. Of course the speed is only 45 mph.

In spite of the advantages of lack of vibration, noise, smell and gearchanging, electric cars have always been crippled by the short range and long charging hours imposed by storage batteries. Several months ago Ford showed their "Comuta," a lightweight four-seater, only four feet, six inches long, but

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still with the old battery restriction.

Last year Leesona Corp. of America announced plans for a new factory to manufacture a new form of battery intended for automobile use. Steam or electricity, either would mean living in quiet cities, breathing fresh air again—something many of us can remember!

Looking at the car we drive today, we are vaguely aware that we have someone or other to thank for dreaming up all the gidgets and gadgets out of sight and mostly out of mind, but what about the man who found the way to put all the pieces together in such a manner that millions of us could afford to buy the car at all? The Model T Ford, somebody said, could go anywhere except in society, and it did. It cost $500 in 1907, less than $400 by 1916, and in its first year made a profit of $27,000,000! Production ceased in 1927. Henry Ford changed the face of civilization.

Clark, Dorothy

Coach Drivers Known As Character Readers

Community Affairs File

Ts OCT 2 9 1972

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Most picturesque of all the figures on the National Road were the stage drivers. Reliable, resourceful, and undaunted in the face of danger, they brought through, often under the utmost difficulties, their passengers and mails. They were autocrats in their own domain and character readers of horse and man. Universally respected in the community, their opinions had great influence. In tavern bar rooms, the center of attraction, they rehearsed the difficulties and perils of the road which lost nothing in the telling.

Then, too, the drivers were great "swells . . . the glass of fashion and the mold of form.' Dressed in great bell-crowned hats, long coats, fancy boots (fur-lined in winter) and gauntlets, they were the targets for the glance of many a pair of bright eyes and much to be envied. "Cos," as old Sam Weller said, "a coachman may do without suspicion wot other men may not; 'cos a coachman may be on the very amicablest terms with 80 miles of females and yet nobody thinks that he ever means to marry one amonst 'em and wot other man can say the same?"

One bitter night a coach stopped before a stage tavern at Putnamville, the landlord and hostler hurried out to lead the passengers and change horses. They called to the driver but the dark figure on the seat remained silent. Clambering up with vague dread, they found him dead, frozen stiff. For over an hour the coach had jolted along in silence with this ghostly driver.

A blinding snow set in one night in the 1840's and the coach, due to pass Ben Hunter's west of here at 10 o'clock, failed to arrive. All night long the storm howled and at daybreak a search party started out. After a long search the coach was discovered off the road in a spice brush hollow. The driver, Rufus Hood, was dead beside his horses and the two Passengers aboard were frozen so badly that they could not speak. They were land buyers from Dayton, Ohio, and ultimately recovered. The horses were stiffened with cold but otherwise unharmed.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

Drivers received $25 a month and their board, the landlords of stage taverns being allowed $75 a quarter for the accomodation of a man and four horses. Each driver had one team which he cared for ordinarily and its looks were as much a matter of pride as his own, and more carefully reported on by the company's inspectors. In some instances a driver would cover two or three divisions of the road, the horses being cared for by hostlers, but usually they drove but twelve miles.

Among the drivers whose names were once familiar to every dweller along the National Road, two stand out with particular prominence, "Mace" Wright and "Si" Bullard. The former drove east and the latter west, both were jovial, accomodating and tremendously popular. Wright was of medium height, heavy

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set with kindly blue eyes and bore the reputation of being one of the best drivers on the road. Bullard was widely known as a singer and imitator and with his own peculiar call on the coach-horn would announce his coming and the number of passengers for meals while a mile away. Like the majority of their fellows they drank bar and passengers always urged the driver to join them.

Following are the names of some of the men who drove in and out of Terre Haute on the National Road during the 1840's: H. H. Adkinson, O. C. Steele, Robert Twilley, General Twilley, William Collins, John Anthony, James Rodgers, Hubert Benedict, Jacob Anderson, Henry Soules, Moses Soules, "Hanks" Washburn, Martin Lathrop, Cyrus Twilley and Charles Dickerson, who was commonly known as "Bourbon" owing to his failing for that particular distillation.

These bold Jehus whose names were once so familiar have gone with the Indian, the buffalo and the prairie schooner; and their once famous exploits have become legend. Yet the stage driver played his part in the settlement of the land, and stands as one of the most interesting characters of his time.

The caoches were the connecting link with the nation and world at large, transmitting the public and private intelligence. They carried the news of national significance to each household, brought the eagerly awaited assurance of safety from absent loved ones, or the bitter announcemnt of sicknessa nd deaht. All looked upon this , advent as the leading occurrence of each day and the mellow notes of the driver's horn were a signal for a gathering in front of the stage tavern to view the animated scene of arrival and departure.

Dashing down the village street would come the gaily

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painted coach, the driver's whip cracking like pistol shots around the ears of his four-in-hand. With a grand flourish he would pull up his reeking, foaming steeds in front of the admiring audience and throw the reins to a hostler, unlock the leathern boot beneath the lofty seat and ostentatiously deliver to the postmaster the way mail.

A few moments of hustle and activity among the arriving and departing passengers while the driver, a prominent and authoritative figure in his light hat and log coat would cast a professional eye over the harness and the coach was off with a trampling of hooves and a rumble of wheels.

Horses Important

Without mention of the horse flesh that made American stage coaching what it was, the subject would be incomplete. Upon it depended the reputation of the line and the ability to carry out the government contracts, hence great care was taken in selection. The majority of the stage horses on this section of the line were purchased in Parke county about ten miles north of Brazil. There the wide and early settle bottom lands of Raccoon Creek offered all the advantages for fine stock raisnig.

The horses chosen were straight-legged, long-bodied,

AP Newsfeatures

Clark, Dorothy Community Affairs File

Development of Railroads Traced from Early Days

Railroads General Info. File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Ts AUG 1 2 1973

The first sight of a steam locomotive throwing up black smoke, giving off glowing sparks, seeming to breathe, to snort, to cough and sizzle, and making its own power out of wood and water, was a startling thing, a new sort of animal, an object to give pause to any person. Applying the first analogy that came to mind, people called it the Iron Horse, and it became a part of American life and the most important machine in the 19th century.

Here was the machine that put transportation into a new era, that set it apart from travel over turnpike. A train of wooden coaches pulled along wooden rails by horses, the method used by a number of 1830 railroads, was not so different from stage coaches pulled along turnpikes by horses. Only the rails were different.

The early English locomotives weighing six or more tons were too heavy for the American rails. The first American locomotives were smaller with two axles and four wheels in front resulting in better weight distribution and also a shorter wheelbase, permitting the machine to take curves in the track with less wear on wheels and rails. This change developed into what railroaders know as a "4-4-0" — an engine with four-wheel leading truck, with four driving wheels coupled, and no wheels behind the drivers.

More changes and developments came along in rapid succession. The steam-tight metal joint that would carry 120 pounds of steam and not leak was perfected. The English joints were made of canvas and lead and would not carry 60 pounds of pressure. Coal instead of wood was used for fuel, and banded wooden wheels were done away with and replaced with chilled steel.

Elaborate decoration of locomotives was begun in the 1850s and continued for a quarter of a century. They were painted every color of the rainbow, and decorated with painted on flowing ribbons, curlicues gold, scrollwork, animal figures and fine lettering. The cabs were made from walnut or mahogany and well-upholstered inside. Sometimes a piece of glass was fitted over the number or name of the engine.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

When derailments were caused by wandering horses or cattle, an American named Isaac Dripps thought up the cowcatcher or pilot. In 1836, when Pennsylvania was visited by a tremendous plague of grasshoppers, it was soon discovered that trains could not run over the slippery squashed bodies of the insects. Crews of men armed with brooms were set to work to precede the trains and sweep the hoppers from the rails. But more often than not the hoppers were back on the rails by the time the next train came along. Brooms attached to the head ends of locomotives soon wore out. Then some forgotten man hit upon the idea of sand. He filled a box with dry sand, put it on top of the locomotive and ran pipes from it down to a point just in front of the drivers. It worked wonderfully well and since then no American locomotive has been without a sandbox.

Beginning to take on its classic form, the iron horse

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Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4

still lacked a whistle. On the early roads the engineer often hung out a flag on a pole when it was time to apply the brakes to the cars, and a lookout sat on the roof of a coach to spy the flag and call the crew to man the brakes. An improvement was quickly discovered when some curious engineer tried a new type of signalling; he lifted the steam valve on the dome, either with his hand or an iron rod, causing steam to rush out with loud hissing and thus attract the attention of the train crew. Soon whistles were an intregal part of all locomotives.

At first, trains ran only in the daylight hours. It was considered very hazardous to run trains after dark, even if there was a need for it. It was necessary to send a pilot locomotive ahead of the passenger train to test the rails, etc. Then Horatio Allen had a small flatcar made, covered the platform with sand, and on top of the sand built a fire of pineknots. This fire-car was pushed ahead of the night-running engine and gave a sort of weird and jumpy illumination of the track. About 1840 the conventional headlight, burning kerosene and having tin reflectors, came into use.

Probably the first effort to increase knowledge of a train's movements was that of some forgotten station agent who erected a wooden tower at his depot and when he thought the cars were about due, he climbed to the tower top and sat there on a perch, spyglass in hand. There he remained until he could glimpse the distant smoke plume. He then climbed down to announce, either by shouting or ringing a bell, or in some cases by blowing a horn, that Number Four would be along pretty soon. Out of these crude watch towers grew the system of semaphore signaling, with its high ball for a clear track.

The unsatisfactory wooden rails topped with strap iron were made obsolete by Robert L. Stevens who whittled out of wood a model for the iron "T"-shaped rail much as we know it today. The "T" rail proved to give the best support for the amount of iron (and later steel) used, and it could also be spiked directly to the ties.

Being individualists, American railroad builders selected a gauge of trac kand bult its engines and cars to fit. This made for something like chaos in later years. Different railroads in the east used 4 ft. 8 in., 4 ft. 9 in., 4 ft., 10 in., 5 ft. and even 6 ft.

Several of the lines laid their tracks on ties of split granite which proved to be too rigid. They had to tear up their expensive roadbeds and put in ties of hickory or oak. The use of preservatives began very early, for in 1833 the soaking of cross ties in salt solution before they were laid was advised.

In 1837 cars of startlingly different design were first put into use. This was the first break away from the stagecoach idea of passenger cars. The new cars ran on eight instead of four wheels and had end instead of middle doors, and for seats benches along the sides with a narrow center aisles. At each end of this new type of car was a small room some five feet square. One was designed for "such feminine passengers as might wish to make changes of their apparel under conditions of privacy," the other was an out-and-out barroom where thirsty males, who were greatly in a majority in that day of comparative masculinity, could wet their whistles as the cars rolled along. Probably many a dram was taken with the explanation it prevented car sickness.

Windows were small and nailed tight shut to keep sparks from blowing in and setting fire to the inside of the coaches. This actually happened more than once. In hot weather these "improved" coaches were unbearably hot and smelly and crowded. In cold weather a small stove was installed in one end of the car and these became the cause of cremation of many passengers when the era of railroad derailments and collisions started to push the ghastly steamboat accidents off the front page.

Night travel was worse. The male traveler hung his coat on one of the wall hooks, put his feet up on the seat in front, if there was room, then lay back and went to sleep if he could. The womenofik could not be so comfortable, for it was not seemly for them to lift what were known as their extremities off the floor. They merely sat and dozed. At night the cars were lighted by one candle at each end, stuck in candlesticks near the doors.

The cars were coupled to each other with some three feet of chain. Since the engineer was no man to worry about the comfort of the passengers, when he started his engine, he opened up fast and took up the slack in the coupling chains with gusto and a bang. More than one traveler reported that the starting of a train jerked off every stovepipe hat aboard. Chains gave way to drawbars, then to link-and-pin coupling.

It was passenger and not freight traffic that kept the primeval railroads running. During 1835 the total freight receipts of railroads operating in Maryland increased by $8,400, while the income from passengers jumped up by $139,000. Railroads actually created travel. The average speed was probably not more than 18 miles an hour. So, the rails multiplied and expanded and every city, every one-horse village in the United States was bound to be on a railroad, even if it had to build one at home and with home capital.

Coming of Electricity Brought Many Changes

Community Affairs File
Clark, Dorothy
Ts APR 22 1973

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Exactly when the first electricity came to Terre Haute has been difficult to pin down. The physics department at the old Normal School had demonstrated static electricity, magnetism, and condenser discharges, but the present day units of voltage, of amperage, and of capacity were still little known.

When the Terre Haute & Alton Railroad was first projected, a telegraph line was strung along that route. At that time, about 1850, there was a line coming into Terre Haute from Indianapolis and a line from there to Cincinnati which gave us communication to the Ohio River points. With the completion of our St. Louis outlet, Cincinnati could deal with New Orleans direct.

In 1852 the local newspapers reported that the Alton line failed to operate until the entire line was taken down and the joints soldered. It would seem, then, that our first work-a-day electrician was a telegraph lineman.

By 1871 the Vandalia line had its telegraph system in operation to St. Louis and we had in Terre Haute two men who knew a great deal about electricity in its working clothes. They were Frank Sweeney and his assistant Archie Taylor.

Sweeney was the inventor of a selective step by step automatic calling device by which he could select any station on the line by simply locating the contact point on his instrument and start a little spring operator motor which called that station until it responded. Sweeney was still active in the service of the railroad until the early Eighties.

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Archie Taylor was one of the first men to install a new telephone in Terre Haute. Nothing more has been learned of his later activities.

In the early part of 1885 an electric light and power company took over the brick building at the intersection of Sixth and One-half street and the Vandalia Railroad which had been built for a boom concern, the Bramble Lock Company, which had faded out of the picture as a Terre Haute industry.

Known as the United States Electric Light and Power Company, it soon changed its name to the Terre Haute Electric Light and Power Company. The organizers included A. J. Crawford, a prominent industrialist concerned with many Terre Haute commercial enterprises; J. P. Crawford, a brother of A. J. Crawford; R. S. Tennant, who was active in the development of our coal fields; Edwin Ellis, the son of George W. Ellis who in 1854 began operation of the Wabash Woolen Mills on First street south of Ohio, was the superintendent and manager of the light and power company throughout its entire life; S. McKeen, who was the brother of W. R. McKeen; Herman Hulman, who was active in the organization of many Terre Haute industries; and R. Geddes, of the firm Havens and Geddes, at Fifth and Wabash. Another organizer of this company was George J. Hammerstein, owner of a china and glass store on the south side of Wabash a few doors east of Third street. He, too, was connected with the company throughout its existence.

The Terre Haute Electric Light and Power Company leased from the Terre Haute and Illinois Railroad for 15 years on Sept. 12, 1885, all of Lot 14 in Ogden Place lying south of a line parallel with and twenty feet south of the railroad's main track and the building on the grounds.

Here they installed a series of arc lighting whose first lamp was near the Union Station at Tenth and Chestnut. From that point other units were established and many business houses along Wabash Avenue as far as Third street were served by this line which continued on its way back to the station. The following year the company contracted with the city to provide electric street lighting instead of gas. The contract provided for a moonlight schedule which operated only during the dark of the moon. For about two weeks it only was lighted before the moon rose in the late evening or was turned off as the moon waned in the early morning hours.

Heavy cooper wiring was used on all the street corner lamp posts, and when the system was abandoned, the receiver inventoried approximately 190 tons of copper in the system.

It was necessary to replace the carbons after a night of use in the old arc lamps. The late attorney, George A. Scott, was employed as the first lamp trimmer. These lamps were suspended at the intersection of the downtown streets by means of a long crane-like mast which was balanced on the corner by a pole which supported a shorter extension of this device and a heavy weight hanging over the sidewalk. This mast was operated by a rod connected to a lever near ground level which when in the downward position elevated the lamp to the proper height. To gain access to the lamp the lower end of the lever was released from its lock and its upward position had lowered the lamp almost to street level where the trimmer could change the carbon.

Soon after the street lighting went into operation the company installed direct current machinery which generated current at a more or less constant voltage. This system was extended from Ninth and One-half to Second street with a pair of very heavy conductors which were fed from both ends of this district, and additional feeders, one of which came up to Eighth street, thence to Chestnut and diagonally across Chestnut to the alley east of Seventh street. This alley was open at that time to Wabash. Another feeder line

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came up Fifth street to reach the main trunk line. As there were no meters in those days, service was supplied to consumers on a monthly charge of $1.25 for what was called a 16 candlepower carbon lamp. Before the advent of incandescent light, many consumers used arc lamps in their interior store rooms. Service to these buildings was furnished through a double pole switch of crude design on the outside of the building and when this was thrown service continued to the building. In reverse position, service was cut off from the building without interruption to the other consumers on the line.

The heaviest feeder line was the one coming up Eighth street which had at the time of its highest operation six cross-arms each carrying six heavy copper wires, three positive on one side and three negative on the other. A heavy iron wire was carried on the station and connected to a volt meter so that the voltage at each of the junctions would be determined.

Terre Haute's Mass Transit Problems of a Century Ago

Community Affairs File

Ts MAY 08 1973

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The first movement to provide transportation on Terre Haute streets began about 1865. Before this date such transportation had been provided by omnibuses owned by several of the local hotels.

There was no uniform system, and when a passenger stepped off the train at the old Union Depot at Tenth and Chestnut streets, he was at once besieged by the various runners, each shouting about the free transportation available to his particular hotel. The bewildered passenger, unfamiliar with the town and its hotel accommodations, was overwhelmed and in danger of either losing his baggage or being taken to a hotel not of his choice.

These horse or mule-drawn conveyances, known as "busses," offered free transportation to the Prairie House, Buntin House, Clark House, Stewart's Hotel, the White Hall Tavern, and a few other smaller hostelries.

It became necessary for the railroad company, which owned and operated the station, to keep the runners off the station platform. Later they granted the right to use the station to a single operator who could serve all comers and deliver them to the hotel of their choosing.

The franchise was granted to the Terre Haute Street Railroad, and they were empowered to lay rail on which cars could be drawn by any sort of traction. However, only horse power was used.

The railway company laid rails in May, 1867, from the Depot west on Chestnut street to Eighth street where it turned south to Main street, and then ran west to First street.

With only two cars on the line, a turnoff where cars could pass each other was located in front of the Prairie House. These first cars seated about twenty passengers and the fare was five cents.

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Mules or horses provided the motive power and were stabled on the west side of Eighth street about where the north end of the Rea Building is located. The rest of the area to the south was the exercise yard. The sidewalk at this point was slightly higher than the level of the yard, and in rainy weather a small lake of very dirty water with an unpleasant odor resulted.

The office of the company was in a small room just east of the main entrance to the hotel. There were about a dozen employees.

On Aug. 3, 1867, two brightly painted cars, with seats along the side, made the first run. These had been bought in New York by Judge Patterson, who was one of the organizers of the company, and two others arrived a little later. The first schedule called for two cars which left the two terminals at the same time and passed each other at the Prairie House ,taking a half hour for a round trip.

This schedule of 106 years ago compares favorably with that of modern day buses, because one could catch a car every 15 minutes. On some present day lines one must wait a half hour. The first service ran from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., after which a single car provided transportation every half hour all night, which

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again reflects on the present service. With the population in those days, this easily cared for the demand.

The first officers of the company were: president, William B. Tuell; treasurer, W. R. McKeen, and secreary, John T. Scott. The other stockholders were: Chauncey Rose, Alex McGregor, Judge Demas Deming, Thomas Dowling, J. H. Hager, John B. Seath, Preston Hussey and C. Y. Patterson.

These were all prominent citizens. Mr. Tuell had been connected with the stage lines. Mr. McKeen was for many years a private banker, and Mr. Scott, who acted as attorney for the firm, was later justice of the Supreme Court of Indiana.

With the coming of the I. & St. Louis Railroad, which had absorbed the old T. H. & Alton Road, their passenger station was located at 6th and Tippecanoe and there was a demand that the street railway build to that new station. Lines were also extended to Locust St. and thence to Rose Polytechnic at 13th and Locust; with a branch running up 8th St. to Collett Park.

The E. Wabash line had been built from 8th St. to the ballpark, about 17th and Main, and in time extended east to Highland Lawn Cemetery.

In 1890 the entire system which included S. 3rd St. as far as the Tool Works was rebuilt as an electric line, and at 11th and Main a branch ran south of Poplar St. east to 13th and south to Crawford St., on the Nail Mill.

In a few years the line was built on 13th from Main to Poplar, and the Poplar and 11th St. lines abandoned. The N. 13th line was extended through Twelve Points to Collet Ave., and west to Harrison Park Casino, a large open vaudeville theater near Collett Park.

Another extension of the N. 13th line ran east to 25th and a branch ran north on 19th St. to Maple Ave. With the building of the power house at 9th and Cherry, and the opening of the new Union Station, that portion of the line between 8th and Main and the old station was abandoned and replaced by a line from 9th and Main to the new Union Station.

This was about the system in later years when the trolley line arrived, and the clang, clang, clang of the trolley was with us for many years.

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Community Affairs File

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Early Transportation Of Wabash Valley

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

FEB 1974

In these fast-moving days of space exploration, jet travel and international tensions, we can easily forget that only yesterday in the long story of civilization the Wabash Valley was still just a wilderness. Our whole country is really still a "youngster" when compared to the cultures of Europe and the Orient.

Just after the war with England for the independence of the colonies, this was a part of a vast frontier land, sparsely occupied even by Indianas and little traveled by white men except for a few traders and trappers. Some explorations had been made, but these were only to map trails and survey the land and not to establish settlements.

The 13 colonies on the eastern seaboard were bounded on the west by a high range of mountains that offered severe hardships to those attempting to venture over their rocky ridges and heavily wooded valleys. In addition, many Indian tribes lived on the western slopes of the mountains and a growing resentment of the white man (spurred by some shabby examples of unjust treatment of the Indian) made travel to the west dangerous enough to give most men second thoughts before venturing west.

To the north, the Iroquois presented another dangerous element to the adventurous traveler considering skirting the northern edge of the mountains. To the south, the equally disquieting Cherokee nation occupied most of the southern lands through which many who wanted to use the Cumberland gap had to travel.

All of these passages presented obstacles but most of the travelers took the central passage, traveling over the mountains and heading west to the Ohio River which soon became the western boundary of the American frontier.

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The earliest travelers over the mountains were not gentle, home-seeking farmers. For the most part, they were hunters, speculators and woodsmen, crude and tough, who cleared a little land and tried their hand at some farming. The next group of people to occupy the land were primarily farmers whose lack of prosperity in the more competitive eastern communities had discouraged them. They ventured west hoping for a new start. These hardy settlers were the first to more or less permanently occupy some piece of land. Often, though, they had little more success in the west than they had back east. Many, when the work seemed too hard, or an area seemed to be getting too populated for their taste, simply pulled up and moved on. Many sold out cheaply to other men and their families coming into the territory.

These latter, more permanent settlers were generally better at arming and using the land. They often had enough money to bring with them tools, possessions and livestock. They built barns and cabins, cleared the land and esbablished the rudiments of a community.

It is hard for us today to imagine a true wilderness forest. We are tempted to think of it as a pleasant countryside, partially wooded with rolling meadows. In reality,

Continued On Page 6, Col. 6.

the early invaders of the territory reported that it was a gloomy, lonely place, empty of song birds and oppressively quiet. Even deer did not inhabit the forests. The heavy forest had little brush and low limbs on which deer could browse. Almost the first thing a settler did was to clear a few trees so he could have some sunlight while he set about erecting a crude shelter.

As Indiana grew to statehood and civilization pushed aside the frontier, the state soon became the gateway to the west. Often, Indiana's rich land and opportunity for enterprise attracted the more conservative and steady homesteader who decided to put down roots on a fertile territory he could see rather than continue westward toward yet another unknown land.

The mixture of people who settled in the Wabash Valley were as rich and varied as the types of wagons that plowed over her early roads. People from all areas of the eastern states began by settling in batches. Even today you can see earmarks of their settlement in some Indiana communities. But soon these settlements became a mixture of Hoosiers — people who found themselves with common problems and needs. Even the early European immigrants soon lost their need to be isolated into small ethnic groups and melted into the general population of both towns and rural communities.

Transportation in the Wabash Valley is really the story of how the area grew from yesterday to today. Without any of the many parts of this story, perhaps it would have been a different place than it is today — perhaps even our nation may even have had a different history.

More and more immigrants from the east, who shunned the Cumberland route to northern Kentucky, used the Ohio River as an artery to the West.

Early river traffic was a strange mixture of dugout canoes, rafts, barges, flatboats and keelboats. Ferries across the river were few and far between.

The remarkable keelboat was the first of the river craft to both go down river and return with cargo. It used the square sail to navigate the upstream current or its crew of husky polemen would move the boat upstream by setting their poles in the river bottom and literally "walking" the boat under them against the current.

The settler's flatboat was a crude cabin-like shelter built on a raft, often with a low fence around it. The settler might later use the lumber of this boat to build his first home.

NOTE: Next week will continue the story of early transportation in Wabash Valley.

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Part 2

Community Affairs File

Early Transportation Of Wabash Valley

Transportation (-rr)

Ts FEB 17 1974

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The typical cargo flatboats used to take corn and pork raised by the early farmers of the Valley down to New Orleans for the market. There, the boats were frequently sold for lumber along with the cargo and the boatmen walked back to their homes.

Even for a long time after roads pushed their way across the state, the river was still the chief artery for travel and commerce.

Land Surveyors and land offices barely preceded the migration of settlers into the Wabash Valley. Land companies were established to make possible the legal purchase of property.

The trails were a far cry from the smooth concrete highways we have today. Traveling New Englanders were harassed by a road that was narrow, bumpy, full of boulders and stumps of trees.

On swampy ground, where the dirt road easily became a quagmire of mud, logs were laid side-by-side in a corduroy effect. Even so, streams still had to be forded. All in all, it was not a pleasant journey and many travelers became sick and even died along the way. However, the excitement to join the westward movement was at fever pitch and hardships were taken in stride.

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Squatters, traders, trappers and adventurous bachelors in search of a western claim made up most of the early travelers. Others were immigrants almost directly from Europe. Unable to find a satisfactory place to settle in the fast-growing eastern cities, they migrated inland. Many migrated into the Wabash Valley and established small colonies. In such communities they started to build homes, churches and schools; they began farming or opened shops, trading native skills and products for a new way of life.

It was early in 1803 when Ohio became the 17th state in the nation. The War of 1812 hardly deterred the migration of people along the trace laid by Ebenezer Zane. The Ohio River, jammed with cargo-laden crafts, was flowing in the wrong direction and not useful to settlers heading into northern Ohio. Indiana, Michigan and Illinois.

By 1818, the much needed National Road had reached Wheeling, West Virginia, and by 1837 had reached the Indiana boundary.

It was an exciting event to watch this first major roadway stretch its way across the relatively virgin landscape. Surveyors pushed through first, followed by gangs of axmen. Horse and ox-drawn plows, graders and ditchers carved a roadbed which was then covered with a thick gravel surface. The final phase was the building of stone bridges (some "S" shaped) and culverts. Finally, stone mile markers were set in place. Many of these markers are still to be seen when traveling along U.S. 40.

This magnificent new road, offering thousands of travelers a relatively safe and easy access both east and west all the way from Maryland to Indiana and Illinois was soon filled with a ceaseless parade of pack horses, Conestoga freight wagons, passenger coaches and droves of livestock.

Poorer travelers, as they always had, camped along the side of the road, sleeping under their wagons. Since about ten to fifteen miles represented a good day's journey, inns soon sprang up along the National Road to accommodate the many travelers who could afford better.

The relay station was usually maintained by coach line companies for the exchange of horses, the coach stopping only for a minute or two. The wagon stands were used primarily for overnight stops by Conestoga wagon drivers, and by livestock drovers. Accommodations were simple but food and drink plentiful.

The stage houses or taverns, forerunners of today's turnpike plazas, offered sleeping accommodations for many travelers in a single room, food and drink, and usually a large yard for wagons, pens for livestock and feed for the many animls traveling over the road.

After pulling in at a tavern stop, the driver's first job was to see to the welfare of his animals. Finishing that, he ate, drank and swapped news and tall tales. He relaxed, smoking long, thin black cigars called "stogies" and retired early. A good night's sleep was both welcome and necessary to prepare for another rigorous day on the Road.

Stagecoaches exchanged horses before pushing on to the next stage house where more luxurious accommodations were available to the bone-weary and bruised passengers. Running on a tight schedule, a passenger had little more than a minute to stretch his legs before fresh horses were hitched and the stage moved on.

The taverns and inns along the National Road were more than stopping places for travelers. They were the links of the frontier people with eastern civilization. They were the source of news, a meeting place for strangers and friends alike, the source of work and the center of community life. Small boys, chores at home finished, were drawn to the inn yard to watch in fascination the much-admired wagoneers and stage drivers. During a busy period, they might even be able to wangle a job helping to water and curry the horses or help pen a flock of sheep.

Many of the inns became small towns as people who moved into the area found this wayside haven the natural hub for the political, social and economic life of the new settlers.

Despite the National Road, heavy forests still covered much of the Wabash Valley and roads served only a relatively small part of the state. Waterways were, in the early decades of the 1800's, still the best and most practical way to open the entire area to settlement and commerce.

The Federal government donated millions of acres for canals that were to eventually cost millions of dollars. They also were to bankrupt the state.

NOTE: Another chapter in transportation history in next week's column.

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Early Transportation Of Wabash Valley

Community Affairs F

Ts FEB 1974 By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Barges on the canals were pulled by mules and horses. They were similar in appearance to the keelboats that plied the rivers. Passengers rode on packet boats with separate cabins for men and women. The pulling animals walked the towpaths on one side of the canal, pulling the boat about three miles an hour. Canal travel was slow, but it was still faster and cheaper than overland travel.

Towns competed for the obvious wealth that would result from becoming terminal points of the canals, and some cities flourished overnight as commerce and trade with the east doubled and tripled with the opening of the canal system.

The biggest bottleneck on the canal system occurred at the locks where upstream boats were lifted to higher water and downstream boats were lowered. Often, many boats were stacked up in the canals waiting their turn through the locks. Maintenance of the water highways was expensive and, in addition, they had to close during the winter.

By 1850, the canals were on the verge of being doomed by the coming of the railroads. For their short but relatively successful life, however, the canals did manage to make Indiana and Illinois prosperous and attractive to the new settlers. Communities along the canals became active, busy towns, many of them the seats of county government. Civilization had at last rubbed off the crudity and hardships of pioneer life.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

Only a few years prior to the opening of the canal system, the overland routes were proving inadequate to the increasing needs of new settlers. The east had the goods the settlers needed and the settlers had products for the ever-populous eastern towns. Everyone wanted better means of travel and shipping and they were determined to get it.

The first steamboats were nothing short of startling to those who first saw them. However, both passengers and shippers were wary of the boiler exploding, so the new methods of river transportation failed to be accepted until 1816 when a steamer made a successful round trip between Louisville and New Orleans. Requiring 25 days for the first upstream trip, by 1840, the time for the same trip had been cut to only five days.

The next new form of transportation was the railroad. Early rail cars were pulled by horses. Steam locomotives, built in England, were imported and saw limited service because they were not designed for the twisting, hilly runs of the American countryside.

Soon American-built locomotives, with coupled wheels and swiveled front trucks, took command and dozens of railroad companies started up in the east. In the early days of railroads, small stretches of track connected towns and passengers changed or rode connecting stages to go any distance.

By 1857, railroad passengers could go through from the east all the way to St. Louis. Not, however, on the same train. Each road had built its track to a different gauge, matching the locomotives it had. Changing trains was common and inconvenient but still a vast improvement over the rough and bruising stage coaches.

Soon, however, adequate headlamps and sleeping cars made schedules possible that were unequalled by any other means of transportation. The railroads were moving more people and more goods than had ever been accomplished before.

Terre Haute soon became the center of several railroad lines, witnessing a rich and exciting half-century as the railroads pushed West to California and wove the country into a common land. Goods and people now moved with convenience and freedom. For nearly a hundred years the silver rails would dominate the transportation arteries of the nation, but the train was not to be the final chapter in the story of transportation. As the 18th Century closed, two events were taking place that were to shape the new Century.

One was happening in a small coal shed behind a two-story house in Detroit, Mich. There, in 1893, a young engineer from the Edison Electric Plant by the name of Henry Ford was experimenting with gasoline engines and the early automobile. By 1896, he had built his first auto and, a few years later, established the Ford Motor Company.

For a decade the automobile was more to be jeered than cheered — a rich man's plaything that scared horses, belched smoke and often broke down.

Suddenly, the auto caught the fancy and favor of America. The Model T was manufactured by new industrial techniques that made its price low enough for many -- and it soon became an inseparable part of American life.

Unlike the train, that had to have tracks on which to ride overland, the irrepressible auto pushed off into the backroads made by and for horses and wagons.

The pioneer products of the auto industry were plagued by sudden failures, flat tires, boiling radiators and mud. A sudden summer shower would turn a dirt road into an impassable quagmire. Many a farmer, smiling at the strange paradox, would hitch up his team of horses to salvage a "horseless" carriage from a mud hole that would have been no problem for a horse-drawn rig.

America, however, was falling in love with the automobile and it wouldn't be long before better roads and better autos would take America from the wooden wheels of yesterday to the rubber wheels of today.

The other event mentioned was happening in Dayton, Ohio. Two brothers — Orvill and Wilbur Wright — were busy inventing the airplane. That, however, is a story of today and not yesterday. So we will end with our recollection of the Model T and of the time when people were busy growing up, helping to build a nation out of a wilderness — only yesterday.

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Community Affairs File

Historically Speaking

18 NOV 28 1976

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Propulsion without labor seems to have been instinctive with man. It was this that put him astride the floating log; later it landed him on the back of a horse, and finally in a carriage. Having achieved the carriage, he tried to get rid of the horse. Here in our own country, saildriven vehicles were tried without any notable success. Humanity was trying hard but not getting anywhere.

With the Selden application of 1879 still pending, Benz and Daimler applied for American patents on automobiles in 1888, but this had little effect on the average American. The bicycle craze was at its peak, and he was skimming around on his bike and was much more agitated over the Sunday runs of his bicycle club and the question of smooth cinder paths over which to make the wheels run more easily.

The entire history of motoring is rapidly moving beyond the memory of living men. One would have to be 99 years old to have heard the pop of the first gas engine, but only 81 to have seen that first engine propel the first vehicle by gasoline. To have ridden in the first American-made car, one would have to be only 75 years old.

Henry Ford wrote in his autobiography: "It was considered to be something of a nuisance, for it made a racket and it scared horses. Also it blocked traffic. For if I stopped my machine anywhere in town, a crowd was around it before I could start it up again. If I left it alone even for a minute some inquisitive person always tried to run it. Finally I had to chain it to a lamp post whenever I left it anywhere."

As soon as the motorists were able to drive their cars out of town, the country innkeepers began advertising they were able to supply automobilists with meals, with gasoline at regular rates, and water free of charge.

Knowing the way was important, for road signs were few and far between, and such as there were led only from one town to the next. The old horse and buggy signboards were almost invariably weather-beaten and in need of repainting. If a signpost rotted and fell, or a board was knocked off by a boy with a rock, the local population was likely to take the attitude that by this time everybody knew the way, so why bother to make repairs.

On many of the early tours, the confetti car went on ahead, leaving soon after daybreak to mark the route by scattering confetti along the highway at reasonable intervals and especially at turns and junction points.

Tire troubles were almost universal, some of the early machines having several in a single day, nail punctures, blowouts, blisters, and frequent instances of rim-cutting.

Whenever the tourists were caught in the rain, there would be an epidemic of electrical troubles from wiring shorted by the moisture. One tourist was heard to remark that they needed no confetti to show them the way, since they could follow the route by the trail of broken spring leaves.

The Model T Ford brought ownership of a car within reach of the average American family. It was never a thing of beauty, but it would take you there and bring you back. It made no pretensions of being silent or smooth riding. The planetary gears would scream like a hyena in starting, and if you happened to use the reverse as a brake, the car would buck like a bronco.

The mechanism was simple, and every man was his own mechanic. If the gas line clogged, you'd take up the front seat, remove the cap, and blow a mighty blast into the tank. This might leave a ring of dirt around your mouth, but it would clear the line.

Starting the motor was a problem. Tickle the carburetor, hold the choke wire at exactly the right spot—a hair's breadth either way would spoil the combination—draw a long breath and hold it—this was supposed to protect you in case of backfire, then give a sudden yank on the starting crank.

This had to be done just so. It wasn't a pull or a push, it was rather a flip or a flirt. You had to take the engine by surprise and step back out of reach. Cranking was learned only by long practice, a fine art like throwing a knuckle ball, and some people never could learn it and had to save up $150 for a self-starter.

From the time of the invention of the first pneaumatic tire, the task of keeping the air inside had been exacting and perpetual. Bicycle tires

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were bad enough, but at least they were easy to handle. The big, tough tires of the motorcar were something else.

At first, motorcar tires had to be repaired without removing the rims from the car, for they were built integral with wheels. In those old days, the fenders were not particularly in the way. They were small and flat, usually stuck on the ends of rods somewhat like a pancake turner.

Removable rims were available as far back as 1904, but they were regarded as unsafe and were several years in coming into general use. A half-hour's work with a sledge hammer was required to loosen the bead sufficiently even to insert a tire iron under it. A tire fork called the "Atlas" expedited labors and cut tire changing time down to an hour. Of course, the time required to pump it up was extra.

Early tires seldom lasted over one thousand miles, and it was several years before a tire gave a mileage of 3,000 miles. Cost of a tire was between $50 and $60.

Because of automobile racing, every owner is driving a better, faster and safer car. The motorist is indebted to the race track for the following improvements: knee action, streamlining, four-wheel brakes, balanced crankshafts, improved bearings, lower radiators, high-speed engines, better shock absorbers, aluminum pistons and longer lasting spark plugs.

Balloon tires were first proved on the speedway, and the rear-view mirror was devised in 1911 at Indianapolis so that Ray Harroun could see behind him going 90 miles an hour.

Before the motor age, travel for pleasure was largely restricted to the rich. Travel for blue and white collar people was restricted to a honeymoon, a trip home to see the old folks, or a ying visit to the World's Fair.

The point is, there had to be an excuse for travel. With the arrival of the motorcar there no longer had to be any excuse. Every motorist began to travel just for the pleasure of riding around and seeing new places. Travel was, in a way, like alcohol—the more you got the more you wanted. And as cars and roads improved, more and more families began taking trips. "See America First" became the popular slogan for all Americans.

—Historically Speaking—

By Dorothy Clark

Ts NOV 20 1977

History of engineering in valley reviewed

History (Wabash Valley)

The history of engineering in the Wabash Valley has to begin with the prehistoric Mound Builders.

The purpose of those huge mounds of earth they constructed in several areas along the Wabash River has remained a mystery. Even more of a mystery is exactly how the work was done without power equipment of any kind, just manual labor.

The Indians of this area built primitive shelters and fashioned arrowheads from blocks of flint, but, as far as engineering goes, this would hardly qualify them.

The building of Fort Harrison in 1811 was done by the soldiers from plans drawn up by the U.S. Army. All forts were built from the same set of plans modified only to suit the terrain and local conditions.

Heavy forests still covered much of the Wabash Valley and trails and roads served only a small part of the state. The waterways in the early 1800s were still the best and most practical way to open the entire area to settlement and commerce.

The National Road was surveyed through Vigo County in 1834. Work began in Indianapolis and was pushed east and west. Major Ogden, of the U.S. Army Engineers, was the government supervisor here, and the workmen reached Terre Haute in 1837.

Under his supervision, substantial bridges were built across the larger streams. Over half a million dollars was spent in Indiana on bridges alone, most of them covered bridges.

Painted bright yellow, one long covered bridge spanned Lost Creek at what is now 19th and Wabash. Later, Lost Creek was re-channelled to empty into the Wabash River north of the city instead of south of town.

Prior to the Civil War, this bridge was removed to Otter Creek at Markle's Mill. There was a red covered bridge on the National Road, which spanned Sugar Creek west of Macksville or West Terre Haute in 1838.

Those were brutal trips on the stage coach on the old National Road. From Terre Haute to St. Louis in good weather in 48 hours was a record breaker. One trip to Indianapolis from Terre Haute in bad weather took 73 hours to go the 72 miles.

At the same time the National Road was being built, the federal government donated millions of acres for canals that were to cost eventually millions of dollars. This Wabash and Erie Canal was also to bankrupt the State of Indiana.

Canal Street, which runs along the south side of the old Pennsylvania Railroad tracks, is the only tangible reminder of the old canal in Terre Haute — unless you know where to look for the abandoned canal bed and the towpaths.

Once a great factor in the growth and commerce of the city, the canal meandered through town from the northwest in the vicinity of the Elk's Club to the southeast and on to Riley, or Lockport, as it was known then.

The canal came close to the river at Locust Street, followed it to Sycamore, where it turned west at the Old Indian Orchard Burying Ground, now Pillsbury's visitor parking lot, and into the basin where canal boats docked and discharged and received freight and passengers, a busy area.

This basin extended from the river bank to First Street. A narrow stream across First Street connected this basin with the upper basin that extended nearly to Second Street. Another narrow basin extended at right angles to the north for about a block, forming a dock and harbor for canal boats. From the upper basin the canal turned north, climbing the hill by the locks near the northeast corner of Second and Chestnut.

The boats entered the lower lock which raised them to the upper lock, about 15 feet. The canal proceeded north, to Canal Street, west of Second Street, and turned east to Seventh Street, or what became the railroad right-of-way. The railroads laid their tracks on the well-tamped towpath whenever they could.

The canal curved to the south along what is now 9½ Street, behind Hulman's, to Poplar Street, where it inclined to the southeast on the way to Riley, then on to the reservoir and ultimately Evansville.

Wooden bridges just high enough to allow the canal boat to pass under crossed the canal at First, Chestnut, Third, Fourth, Lafayette Avenue, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Wabash and Poplar streets. The bridge at Lafayette Road was at street level and swung on a pivot when a canal boat passed.

In the 1850s, when the canal was the only means of travel to and from the north, the arrival of packet boats was an interesting sight. First the long horn on the boat was heard, then the three-horse team, tandem, would trot into view, moving the boat at a good pace.

Then the boat would come into view with all the passengers on deck. The long towrope would be cast loose, and the boat would float of its own momentum diagonally across the basin to the landing pier. The best packet boats made about eight miles per hour.

To be continued next Sunday ...

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—Historically Speaking—

By Dorothy Clark

Ts NOV 2 7 1977
Terre Haute
History Wabash Valley
Community Affairs File

Further reflections on engineering in valley

Last week's column began the history of engineering in the Wabash Valley, from the days of the Mound Builders up to the 1850s and the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Similar in appearance to river keelboats, the canal boats were pulled by mules or horses. Passengers rode on larger packet boats with separate cabins for men and women.

The horses or mules walked along the towpath constructed on one side or the other of the canal, depending on the terrain, pulling the boats about three miles per hour. Canal travel was slow, but still faster and cheaper than overland.

Built entirely by man and his trusty shovel, or a crude iron scraper shovel pulled by a horse, canal building was an engineering marvel created by Irish immigrant laborers.

Before the age of pumps, the water was raised and lowered entirely by gravity. The biggest bottleneck on the canal system occurred at the locks when upstream boats were lifted to higher water and downstream boats were lowered.

Often many boats were stacked up in the canals waiting their turn through the locks. Maintenance of the water highways was expensive, and, in addition, they had to close during freezing weather.

By the 1850s, the canals were doomed by the coming of the railroads. For their short but relatively successful life, however, canals did manage to make Indiana and Illinois prosperous and attractive to new settlers.

By 1857, railroads provided travel from the east coast to St. Louis, but not on the same train. Each railroad company had built its track to a different gauge, from 4'8" to 6 feet, matching the locomotives it had, and changing trains was common and inconvenient, but still a vast improvement over rough and bruising stage coaches.

After head lamps were developed for night travel and sleeping cars added, the train travel picked up and the schedules became more reliable.

Terre Haute became a railroad center, then came street railways and the electric interurban. Engineering was coming into its own in the Wabash Valley.

Safety engineers would be interested in the volunteer fire companies first organized in Terre Haute in 1855. They used the bucket-brigade method forming a line from the river or from the nearest public cistern.

After the first volunteer companies acquired the little handpumpers, the race to get to the fire first when the fire bell rang was sometimes more important than putting the fire out. Sometimes the men would get into a fight over which group got there first, and forget to pump water! City fire departments were not established until after the Civil War.

Over 100 years ago, Terre Haute was busily trying to clean up and organize itself into a newly-chartered incorporated city. City fathers were trying to fill up or drain all the land within two miles of town, control cemeteries, isolate smallpox victims, establish a waterworks, and see that all garbage was dumped outside the city limits. Sewers, drains and cisterns were in the news.

The Chestnut Street or Canal Sewer was started in 1873. The city's first sewer and main outlet was laid in the old canal basin.

By 1896, it drained 1,000 acres as all storm drains were led into this from Crawford street north. Eventually the Ohio street sewer helped drain some of the eastern downtown area, but one notices there is still a storm water problem at Third and Crawford in heavy rainstorms.

Before the turn of the century, it was commonplace in Terre Haute to move huge houses and business buildings from one location to another. Without the power equipment available today, it seems incredible how successfully they were able to accomplish this engineering feat. Very large houses were sometimes cut into two houses and moved to two different locations and remodeled into durable homes.

One of the most remarkable ventures happened downtown on Wabash Avenue. A row of business buildings was raised a full story and the only equipment used was brute strength, lots of manpower, wooden jackscrews and sturdy blocks.

On a given signal, all the men would heave and turn the jackscrews while other brave men pushed the blocks under the foundation, all at the exact same time. This remarkable feat was copied in other cities after it happened successfully here.

Present day engineers can appreciate the fact that all this was done without the mixed blessings of OSHA and hard hats.

Terre Haute has always furnished ample employment opportunities for engineers, from the days of the Mound Builders to the present time. The talents and technical know-how was needed to keep the wheels turning in the Wabash Valley.

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Mules played part in public transportation

T s JAN 2 2 1984 Clark, Dorothy J. Transportation

Historically speaking

By Dorothy J. Clark

The Herdic line was used before mule cars as public transportation in Terre Haute. This small horse-drawn omnibus had a step on the rear for passengers to get on and off and seats along the sides. It did not run on a track but weaved along the street from one curb to the other, taking on and discharging passengers in front of their home or place of business. These conveyances and the horses were stabled in a grove between Osborne and Hulman streets on South Third Street.

The first mule drawn street cars ambled along Wabash Avenue from Second to 13th Street. This line was supplemented by a line on South Third from Main to Osborne Street.

Turntables were placed at terminal points to enable the mule driver conductor to save a little time and labor. He was saved the bother of unhooking the double-tree and driving the mules to the other end and hooking them on again.

Small boys enjoyed turning the turntables half way around so the poor old mule skinner had to get off the car and turn them back into line again.

Frank Leslie Campbell came to Terre Haute from Evansville in 1873. He stood on the front end of a street car and drove a mule on the line that ran from the old Chestnut Street Depot to the Terre Haute House. Driving "Dixie," the largest mule ever used on the local street railway system, was a major problem of his job. He later became trainmaster of the main line of the Vandalia Railroad.

The mule-drawn street car era in Terre Haute had its colorful characters, too. A resident of the Vigo County Home, "Old Black Cal" Monroe, would come to town about once a month and inspect the transportation system.

Planting himself in the middle of the street, he would signal the oncoming street car driver to stop. Then he would peer under the car from both sides, test the harness and examine the mule's teeth, before giving the "go" sign.

This duty over, Cal would hunt up some cronies and cadge as many drinks as possible before being taken back to the farm that night. He was seldom put in jail.

The double-deck street car was introduced in Terre Haute about the time Harrison Park Casino, located just north of Collett Park, was the most popular place to go on summer nights. The upper, or hurricane deck, afforded a cooling ride on hot nights.

By switching from one line to another, it was possible to gain a long ride for only a nickel. To take care of casino traffic, the North Sixth Street line was extended to the Maple Avenue entrance to Collett Park by way of Eighth and Locust streets.

Electric trolley cars were well received by local residents. The first car made its initial run down South Third Street loaded with city and county officials and other dignitaries.

Practically every stray dog in town chased along side and barked its approval or disapproval of the strange contraption which was neither pushed nor pulled, but speeded along the tracks as if by magic.

One trolley line extended east on Wabash to 19th Street, where it was met by Josephus Blake's Dummy Line which had a short life due to public demand for the extension of the trolley farther east.

Blake's line was constructed from 19th Street to the fairgrounds where the stadium is now. It consisted of a donkey engine mounted on wheels, with several open cars trailing behind. The fare was 10 cents.

Small boys made life miserable for the fare collectors, especially during fair week. Chased off one side, they hopped back on the other side. Because the cars were usually overloaded, they made very slow progress. The boys could have walked faster than the car, but the fun of getting a free ride was well worth it.

The only public transportation in the 1880s in Terre Haute was the lumbering, mule or horse-drawn Herdic line which ran south on Sixth Street from downtown. A few south-enders acquired ponies and phaetons to avoid the Herdic fares, but soon found the cost of feeding the animal was more than they bargained for, in addition to the manure-shoveling, etc.

In addition to using the Herdic line for business and necessary trips to town, people would pay the fare to ride past the lovely mansions on South Sixth and see the large plate glass windows with their beautiful scrim curtains and draperies. The sight-seeing natives of a century ago were easily satisfied with this simple pleasure.

Trips of discovery on Sunday afternoons in a horse and buggy included visits to the Rose Orphan Home, Rose Polytechnic Institute, Lake Fluvanna on the Joseph Gilbert farm, and Collett Park.

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'Fast' delivery was glorious

Clark Dorothy + Postal Service (US)

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APR 1 1984

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

You'd never guess it by watching movie and television westerns, but stagecoaches made only five miles an hour. No wonder the postoffice had such a hard time getting the mail from here to there and back again.

In 1858, President James Buchanan hailed "a glorious triumph for civilization and the Union" when the mail had just been taken by stagecoach from St. Louis to San Francisco jiffy quick in 23 days and four hours.

This glorious triumph was nothing, really. In 1860, when Buchanan was about ready to leave the White House, the news of Lincoln's election was rushed West by Pony Express in seven days and 17 hours.

Advertisements appeared in San Francisco newspapers that year that stated: "Wanted: Young, skinny, wiry fellows not over 18. Must be expert riders, willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred. Wages $25 per week." Their chore was to ride the Pony Express.

For postal progress, the Pony Express era was hard to beat, but it only lasted 18 months. It was done in by the railroads.

In the early days the method of paying postage was reversed from today. The receiver picked up the tab, usually 25 cents a letter.

Some early mailing practices almost have been forgotten. Once major rivers were designated as post roads. The famous steamboat, the Robert E. Lee, was a mail boat.

In Boston in the early days the postmaster would put a lighted candle in his window when the mail arrived. It's hard to get service like that any more.

Oct. 1, 1879, the free postal delivery system was inaugerated in Terre Haute. The previous April, Special Agent Smith of New York City spent several days here laying out the routes, locating boxes, and making all the necessary arrangements.

Under the rules 105 years ago, Terre Haute became a second-class office, and was allowed six mail carriers and 40 mail boxes. Local residents who had occasion to go to the post office after the arrival of each mail agreed that the new service fulfilled a "want long felt."

Persons living on the outskirts of town found it to be a great advantage to have mail delivery to their door. Everyone cooperated by placing numbers on their houses, and soon all letters were addressed to street and number.

Complaints were heard that this system would reduce the value of property in the vicinity of the post office, but this was termed "mere nonsense." It is true that South Sixth Street was not visited by the large crowds usually seen there, but people had to go to the post office to buy stamps, have letters registered, etc.

Businessmen in the vicinity of the post office were assured there would not be "a falling off in the custom of that locality." In fact, businessmen in other cities where the free delivery system was already established said that their business was better.

Postmaster Nicholas Filbeck was given great credit for his indefatigable energy in bringing about this progress to Terre Haute's post office. Since 1873 he had been traveling around the country visiting cities where free mail delivery had been put in operation.

In 1852, according to the Wabash Express, stamped envelopes were provided by the post office. The Wabash Courier reported that "after Jan. 1, 1856, letters to any part of the United States must be prepaid by stamps or stamped envelopes." One, three, 10 and 12 cent stamps were available, along with three and 10 cent stamped envelopes.

Single letters (one-half ounce or under) to California, Oregon, Washington and Texas cost 10 cents. Only five cents was the charge to any other part of the U.S. in 1856. Any letter weighing over half an ounce and under an ounce cost double rates, etc. Letters to Canada cost 10 cents, to England, Ireland and Scotland, 24 cents, and newspapers could be sent anywhere in the U.S. for a one penny stamp.

Eighty years ago when Samuel E. Gray was postmaster, the Terre Haute Post Office published a small directory complete with photos of all the clerks and carriers. Two suggestions for the people who patronized the local post officer were particularly interesting.

"It is wonderful how many people violate the law by writing in newspapers. Such matter is constantly examined and always detained. The addressee usually has to send five times the amount of letter postage in order to receive such 'letters.'"

The other suggestion hints at local society customs. "Blue envelopes and white ink may be very swell, but mailed at night they can scarcely be deciphered by the clerks. Plain black ink and white envelopes are always best."

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TIB route book guided drivers on their ways

Ts JUL 12 1987

Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Today's vacationing travelers seldom think about smooth, well-marked highways and convenient rest stops, but it was not always thus.

Back in 1916 many motorists wouldn't dare to venture out in their automobiles without their trusty TIB Route Book. This hefty, five-pound directory was published by the Touring Information of America and was the only book ever published giving detailed Strip Maps.

This one handy volume furnished the main traveled routes in America from Ohio to Colorado, along with complete transatlantic highways. The strip maps showed directions, mileage both ways, forks, turns, cross roads, city streets, population of cities, railroad crossings, trolley lines, elevations, rivers, bridges and other landmarks, garages, hotels and supply stations.

Tourists were warned to follow the TIB Book implicitly and avoid "short cuts" and "advice from unscrupulous persons who might offer a better way."

There were no official road signs in those days. Broad stripes of various colored paints were applied to electric light poles and telephone poles to mark the route. Being a federal highway, the National Road always was marked with red, white and blue. Other roads, streets and county highways were marked with other colors. Bright yellow and orange were popular and readily seen colors.

In 1916 the road from Terre Haute to Marshall, Ill., was described as a variety of poor macadam and dirt, and warnings stated that it was dirt most of the way and bad in wet weather.

The best route across Illinois for Missouri and western points left Terre Haute on a gravel road for 16 miles which turned into dirt before reaching Paris, Ill. Route 303, as it was designated then, proceeded on through Redmon, Oakland, Arcola, Chesterville, Arthur, Lovington, LaPlace, Antioch and Decatur.

One of the main routes north from Terre Haute to Illinois or Indiana points also was a gravel road. It crossed the Wabash River at Clinton, whose population in 1916 was 6,229, and continued on through Hillsdale, Newport, Cayuga, Rileysburg, and crossed the state line. The rest of the route to Hoopeston, Ill., a distance of 87.6 miles, was shown on the strip map.

Motorists in 1916 followed the patriotic color bands on the poles to drive from Terre Haute to Indianapolis over gravel and macadam roads. In Brazil the official TIB station was U. J. Wilding's Garage opposite the fire department. Here the motorist could find storage, repair, accessories and filtered gasoline.

From Terre Haute to Sullivan the TIB-recommended route was the gravel and rock road known in 1916 as the Dixie Bee Line Highway. It began at Fourth and Ohio streets going south to Osborne Street, then a turn right and left.

Picking up the trolley, the driver followed it "2.0 miles, turn left, 4.9 miles turn right, bear left crossing bridge. Bend right and left on main road, travel 25.2 miles turn left. Sullivan 28.0 miles."

The road from Terre Haute to Bloomington was described as "hilly with magnificent scenery." This macadam route started at Seventh and Wabash going south to Seventh and Poplar "where left turn crossing railroads and trolley straight ahead on main travel.

"Follow to Swalls, 6.5 miles. Continue with poles bearing right to 8.5 miles, turn left then right around church. 14.6 miles turn right. 15.6 miles turn left. 17.1 miles turn right. 19.0 miles end of road, go left, crossing bridge and railroad soon after to 19.6 miles turn right into Ashboro, 19.8 miles.

"Straight through to 21.0 miles, four-corners. Straight through on winding road to Bowling Green, 25.1 miles. Turn right and left around square passing school on your right. End of road, turn left. 28.4 miles Beamer.

"Straight ahead on winding road, through all branch roads to Vandalia, 26.0 miles. Turn left. 38.1 miles straight ahead to Spencer, 41.2 miles. Straight ahead on Main Street. 42.1 miles turn left following poles on winding road to 46.5, ahead right. 50.3 miles turn right, coming into Elletsville, 51.6 miles. Follow winding road to 57.1, turn left then right in Bloomington, 59.4 miles."

Travelers of 71 years ago were routed from Terre Haute to Lafayette via Veedersburg and Attica over macadam and gravel roads. Again leaving Seventh and Wabash, the motorist drove north on Seventh to Lafayette Avenue. "Bear right following electric line and poles to Lyford, 14.1 miles. Bear right going straight ahead to Armiesburg, 21.8 miles."

This route continued through West Union, Tangier, Kingman, Yeddo, Steam Corner, Veedersburg, Stone Bluff and Rob Roy into Attica and from there to Lafayette.

Terre Haute was described by TIB as the "center of the Indiana coal district, the distributing point of all the coal mined in a 2,200-square-mile area. Many other industries are located there, as well as several colleges of prominence." Terre Haute ranked second to Peoria in whiskey distilleries.

In 1916 Terre Haute's population was 58,157. The strip map to Crawfordsville gave the population of the towns along the way: Ellsworth 50; Atherton, 100; Mecca, 800; Rockville, 1,943; Judson, 141; Guion, 50; Milligan, 80; Waveland, 676; Brown's Valley, 15; New Market, 334; and Crawfordsville, 9,371.

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to trains

Leisure of canal boat gave way

Ts AUG 2 3 1987

Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The opening of the Wabash & Erie Canal to Terre Haute from the north in 1849, and to Evansville in 1852, inevitably changed things in the city.

On Sept. 8, 1849, according to the Wabash Courier, the water was let into the new canal from the north, and it was within a mile and a half from the city.

By Oct. 27 boats were operating. Two were loading corn at Otter Creek a few miles north of town. One of the first boats to reach here gave a crowd of people an excursion nearly two miles up the canal north and back, accompanied by band music and much hilarity.

When they returned, they were greeted by the roaring of cannon. At three o'clock, a fine dinner was enjoyed at the Prairie House by all the boat proprietors and others on the excursion. There were speeches and toasts before both boats returned north that evening.

Soon after that happy event, there were several breaks in the canal. Traffic was delayed for some time. Low water also interfered with the movement of boats, so that it was not strange that the railroads, with their greater speed and certainty and their direct times to the eastern markets, soon made the canal profitable.

The railroads — east, north, south and west — opened in quick succession from 1852 on. The telegraph in 1850 speeded both types of transportation through the Terre Haute area.

For a leisurely trip, there was much in favor of the canal boat. The packet "Ohio" with Captain Davis arrived here in May 1850. It was reported by the newspaper to be "a fine boat and has one of nature's noblemen for commander.

"Everything appears to be in fine order on board, and the significant proportions of the captain strongly indicate the good cheer of the pantry. A number of gentlemen had more satisfactory evidence of this subject in the shape of an elegant dinner, to which they were invited in the cabin. At four o'clock the "Ohio" took the party a few miles up the canal."

Mr. Beste gave an excellent description of a canal boat in his journal when he left Terre Haute in August 1851.

"The construction of the canal boat was, in miniature, much the same as that of the lake and river steamers. There was no hold or underdeck, but on the deck, at the stern, were raised the kitchen, steward's room and offices.

"In the center of the boat was the large saloon, the sitting room of all by day, the sleeping room of the male passengers by night. Adjacent it was the ladies' saloon, beyond which again was a small cabin containing only four berths.

"This cabin was separated by a curtain from the ladies' saloon, and on the other side opened upon the bow of the vessel. In it was a looking glass, hand basin, two towels, a comb and brush, for the use of the ladies."

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At five o'clock in the evening, the Beste family party stepped from the little quay at Terre Haute on board the boat. Three horses were harnessed to a rope, about 50 yards ahead of the boat. They started at a moderate trot, and the town . . . was soon lost to sight.

The Wabash & Erie Canal entered Terre Haute from the north close to the river bank, at the eastern end of the present Big Four bridge. From here it went straight south along the river bank to the basin on Water Street, just south of Eagle Street. In its course it passed through the west end of the Old Indian Orchard Cemetery, just south of the present Vandalia bridge.

From the north end of the turning basin it went northeast to a point near the corner of Third and Chestnut streets, then straight north, on the west side of Third Street, to Canal Street, then straight east, where the railroad tracks are at present. The roadbed of the tracks was laid on the tow path of this section of the canal.

In front of where the Union Station used to be, it curved around and went south between Ninth and Tenth streets up the present alley, to about Ohio Street, then angled southeast out of the city towards Riley, then called Lockport.

The basin and docks at Terre Haute were said to be the finest on the whole canal, having steps leading down to the landing, and a hand railing. Of all this activity, there are hardly any traces left, some 135 years later.

The remains of the stone locks at Riley still are visible. North of town, the old towpath of the canal still is very evident at the Elks Club and the site of historic Fort Harrison.

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Traffic troubles

Did anybody get the number of that chariot, wagon, steetcar or truck?

Is SEP 18 1986 Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Ever since people began congregating in towns and cities, the problem of too many horses and buggies or wagons has riled humans — even before the coming of the automobile.

Traffic control dates back to at least the first century B.C. when Julius Caesar banned daytime wheeled traffic in Rome. Later, according to "Smithsonian" magazine, the Emperor Hadrian limited the number of carts entering the imperial city.

Around 1500, Leonardo da Vinci designed bi-level streets to separate vehicles from pedestrians. Congestion was so bad in 17th-century Europe that some cities created no-parking zones and one-way streets.

This only goes to prove this writer's private theory that there is nothing new under the sun, just different people doing it!

The first recorded auto accident in the United States occurred in New York (where else?). In 1896, Henry Wells, driving a Duryea electric, struck Evelyn Thomas, a bicyclist.

The first official U.S. automotive fatality, also in New York, was recorded in 1899 when Henry Bliss stepped off a trolley into the path of a car driven by Arthur Smith. But traffic on the city's streets must have been dangerous as early as the 1860s, when New York constructed an elevated footbridge over Broadway at Fulton Street.

Traffic signals originated in England in 1868 when London set up manually turned semaphores. In 1908, New York created the Bureau of Street Traffic and set up its own semaphores.

The first electric signal lights went up Aug. 5, 1914, in Cleveland, and by 1919 New York City was installing bronze towers to house its electric traffic signals.

As late as 1932 one veteran cop, who mistrusted electricity, still rolled out his hand-cranked semaphore every morning at his post on Parkside Avenue in Brooklyn.

Many readers will remember the days when Police Officer Rickelman directed traffic for many years at Seventh and Wabash. There are many stories to tell about this colorful career patrolman.

What about the time he stopped a car for a minor traffic mishap? The young couple apologized for their error and used as their excuse the fact that they were on their honeymoon from Pennsylvania. Immediately, Rickelman questioned that statement. If that was true, then why did their license plate have "Pa." on it?

I still like the one about the time he was walking his beat on North Seventh Street and found a dead dog at the corner of Tippecanoe. Officers were required to fill out dead animal reports, and Rickelman couldn't spell Tippecanoe, so he dragged the dead animal to the corner of Seventh and Elm. He could spell Elm!

Terre Haute began providing for public transportation and all of its problems in 1866 when city fathers authorized the laying of streetcar tracks. Single and double tracks were authorized on Wabash, Ohio, Cherry, Walnut, Mulberry, Poplar, Eagle, Swan, Chestnut, Oak, Lafayette Road, and north and south streets from First to 10th streets. Any necessary turn-outs for side-tracks and switches also were authorized.

Animal power was used on these tracks only, and these tracks could not connect with any other railway on which any other power was used. The street railway was used only to transport passengers and their ordinary baggage.

The tracks were not to be elevated above street level so as not to interfere with the passage of wagons, carriages, or other vehicles along or across the track. All tracks had to be of uniform gauge, not exceeding 5 feet in width, laid in the center of the streets only.

The first streetcars were not allowed to go more than 6 mph. While the cars were turning corners from one street to another, the horses or mules were not driven faster than a walk. A distance of 200 feet had to be kept between cars running in the same direction.

Safety rules abounded, including "conductors shall not allow ladies or children to enter the cars while in motion," and "cars, after sunset, shall be provided with signal lights." A fine up to $50 was levied on anyone convicted of hindering or stopping a streetcar after the driver or conductor had rung the warning car bell.

In 1868 it was necessary to pass an ordinance "prohibiting all persons, not in good faith intending to use them as conveyance, from jumping on Horse Cars in the city, while the same are in motion." There was a fine not to exceed $25 for this offense.

At the same City Council session, a similar ordinance relating to railroad trains within the city limits was passed. This crime carried a $50 fine.

Many ordinances pertained to streets and public transportation. It became necessary to regulate the use of stagecoaches, hacks, drays and other vehicles used to transport passengers, freight or other articles within the city for hire or pay. They tried to prevent "immoderate riding or driving" (an early term for just plain speeding). It became necessary to regulate the speed of horses, carriages, locomotives, you name it.

Other traffic hazards following the Civil War included the "running at large of cattle, horses, swine, fowls, and other animals." Small boys were known to make life miserable for streetcar motormen by jumping on and off, and moving the turntables around.

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aviation

Hoosiers had keen interest in early

T s APR 3 0 1989

Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Numerous incidents of spectacular success along with dramatic tragedy mark the early history of aviation in Indiana. The story of John Anthony, Indiana's first aviator, adds a comedic touch of "Darius Green and His Flying Machine" to those early days of Hoosier aeronautics.

A farmer living near Shoals, Anthony was an educated man with a flair for invention. Late in the 1870s, nearly a quarter of a century before the Wright brothers made their first successful flight, Anthony believed he could sail through the air like the birds if he had the proper equipment.

Indifferent to the ridicule of his neighbors, Anthony began to spend much time and money on his "flying machine," and by 1881 believed he was ready. His airship was a bird-like glider very like the one the Wright brothers flew in 1903 at Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Anthony hoisted his craft to a high platform on top of his barn roof, and declared his intention to fly. He climbed aboard his glider, waved his arm, and a friend pushed the contraption over the edge.

Spectators gasped as the flying machine lurched, wobbled, then plunged to the ground in a tangle of splinters. Badly injured in the crash, Anthony, the intrepid aviator, never attempted to fly again. His neighbors said, "I told you so."

In the years that followed Anthony's ill-fated flight, interest in aviation increased steadily in Indiana. Wilbur Wright, who teamed up with his brother, Orville, to build the first practical airship, was a native of this state, and many other famous aviators have been developed in Hoosierdom.

To Lafayette goes the honor of being one of the first cities in this country to send mail by air. On Aug. 17, 1859, John Wise, a well-known balloonist, took a sack of mail aboard his craft at Lafayette and headed toward New York. Bad weather sent the balloon southward, however, and it landed near Crawfordsville, where the mail was relayed east by train and canal boat.

Some of the earliest airmail flights in Indiana were made at Evansville in 1912, when Lincoln Beachey, famous Hoosier pioneer pilot, flew mail from a sub-station two miles to the Evansville post office. Beachey's flights were made during an aviation meet. Other mail trips were made during the same year at Bedford, Rockport and Boonville.

In June 1910, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway was the base of one of the most spectacular "flying circuses" ever held in America. Among the notables participating in the aviation contest were the Wright brothers and Lincoln Beachey. Eighteen years before at a similar flying circus in Indianapolis, Beachey won fame by demonstrating that his monoplane could fly over the tree tops at the north end of the field.

During World War I, the Speedway was a military center and for several weeks was the base of the British Royal Flyers who were visiting America. Twice the national balloon races have been started from the infield of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Hundreds of aviation enthusiasts returned to Indiana after the close of World War I. These young men had been trained to fly at American aviation training camps or had been in the service overseas. They longed to "take to the air" and soon were promoting flying fields in their localities.

Terre Haute residents also had a keen interest in aviation around the turn of the century. It was in an old barn back of 717 N. 10th St., that the Johnson brothers built their first airplane motor. Their first complete airplane was a biplane constructed of white pine, hard-carved, glued and fitted together. Even the propellor was carved by hand. When this first airship failed to prove up to their expectations, spectators were

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shocked to see them take an axe and chop it to bits.

On Aug. 8, 1911, Louis Johnson flew their first all-metal monoplane ever built in the United States. Resembling a huge horsefly, this airplane of steel and aluminum was equipped with the same double-valve engine. It boasted a wingspread of six feet and represented some two and a half years' work by the Johnson brothers.

On that first flight, the plane sped along the ground for a distance of about 100 feet, then rose gracefully into the air and circled the field at an altitude of about four feet.

After making some adjustments, the second flight took place a few hours later and was even more successful. This time the machine soared 40 feet into the air for a distance of about 300 yards. The speed was estimated at about 30 miles per hour.

A beautiful scale model of this historic monoplane built by the Johnson brothers can be seen at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

☆ Clark, Dorothy

Horse-and-buggy days

Transportation needs drove a booming business

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Historically speaking

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By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

In 1872, the population of the growing city of Terre Haute was 18,000. It was surprising how many residents made their living from some trade or business connected with those horse-and-buggy days.

A large part of the local economy was geared to the horse, his saddles, harness, collar, feeding, housing, grooming and shoeing, as well as to the wheeled vehicles the horse was expected to pull.

Then, as now, the rental business in transportation was a lucrative business, and since a fleet of vehicles was necessary to speed the departed one and his mourners to the graveyard, the livery business frequently was the basis for setting up in the undertaking or funeral-parlor business.

Terre Haute boasted of three carriage manufacturing plants employing 46 people in 1872. Their capital investment was $28,000, and their annual sales totaled $80,000.

The only hub-and-spoke factory employed 45 people, totaled $20,000 in capital investment, and sold more than $50,000 worth of products.

There were nine harness- and saddle-makers employing 52 people with capital investment of $22,000 and total sales of more than $80,000 a year. The wholesale trade in leather, hides, etc., totaled nearly half-a-million dollars.

Fourteen blacksmiths and horseshoers were employed in Terre Haute in 1872. They were S. Archer, located on the north side of Cherry Street west of Fourth Street; Burnett & Crawford, north side of Cherry between Third and Fourth streets; Edwin S. Coppage, 31 S. Fourth St.; Christian Dressler, corner Sixth Street and Lafayette Avenue; A. Glick, east side Third south of Walnut Street; J. Hahn, west side of First Street south of Main Street; and Ironsmith & Kizer, west side of Third between Walnut and Poplar streets.

Also, F.L. Meyer, south side Cherry east of Fifth Street; Sylvester Owen, south side Main between 13th Street and Central Avenue (now 13½ Street); E. Pearman, northeast corner Lafayette and Tyler (this street ran east and west between Canal and Tippecanoe); J.B. Sherburne, east side Third south of Walnut; Smith & Watson, north side Cherry between Third and Fourth; Stein & Fry, south side Cherry between Third and Fourth; and Henry Weaver, southwest corner Main and Central Avenue.

Scott, Oren & Co., proprietors of the Terre Haute Coach Works on the south side of Cherry between Third and Fourth, carried on the largest business in their line of any establishment in the city. The company employed about 20 workers, and turned out some of the finest special carriages and buggies to be found anywhere.

Scott, Graff & Co. was located at No. 33 Second St. This firm had long been associated with the finest built carriages and spring wagons in Indiana. All practical workmen, they prided themselves on having ready-made work in a large variety always on hand.

Wildy & Poths, one of the old manufacturing interests in the city, was relocated on the southeast corner of Second and Walnut streets. The company made a speciality of fine carriages and buggies which were sold in Vigo and adjoining counties.

Other carriage- and wagon-makers in 1872 were J.L. Binkley, south side of Main east of 13th St.; Macauley & Deusner, northeast corner Fifth and Mulberry; and J.W. Shirley, north side Cherry east of Third.

Slaughter & Kerkhoff, wholesale dealers in saddlery hardware, was located at No. 5 S. Fifth St. The company had lately purchased the stock of Fred A. Ross and rented his extensive store, which put them at the top of their line in the entire state. It stocked leather, horse collars, buggy whips, etc.

Other leather firms of 1872 were listed as L.A. Burnett & Co., 144-149 Main St.; Drake & Ross, 9 S. Second St.; Duenweg Brothers, 66 Main; B.W. Koopman, 158 Main; and J.H. O'Boyle, 178 Main.

Listed as saddle- and harness-makers were Farley & Roach, 80 Main; G. Handword, No. 2 N. Second; Phillip Kadel, 196 Main; George Kramer, 199 Main; Peter Miller, old Post Office building on South Fourth; S. Musselman, No. 4 N. Second; Willis H. Richmond, 194 Main; Peter Ryan, southwest corner Second and Main; and Rufus St. John, No. 8 S. Second.

The only tannery and horse collar-maker listed was B. Daugherty, at the corner of Water and Walnut streets.

Wolfe & McClung's livery and sale stables was located at Beauchamp's old stand, west side of North Third between Cherry and Main streets. The company advertised that horses and carriages were ready on short notice.

The Prairie City Livery Stable Co. had three different locations in town. The proprietors were A.B. Fouts, W.R. Hunter and A. J. Thompson. They operated the Fouts Stable on Second between Cherry and Main; the Opera Stable, corner of Eighth and Main; and the Thompson Stable on Third between Ohio and Walnut.

Other livery stables in 1872 were Beauchamp & Pugh, west side Sixth Street between Ohio and Walnut; Eclipse Stables operated by E.W. Chadwick & Co., on east side Fourth between Main and Ohio; and Griffith & Gist, 142 Main, which operated the Terre Haute Omnibus Line.

The previously mentioned hub-and-spoke factory was the firm of Keyes & Mancourt, southwest corner of First and Poplar streets.

Terre Haute was strictly geared to the horse and buggy 118 years ago. Steam and gasoline buggies had yet to appear.

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A Clark, Dorothy

Full steam ahead for Hall

'Romeo' landed up to 65 times from here to Vincennes

TS MAY 26 1991

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

When Emmet Hall, pioneer riverboat captain was interviewed by a local newspaper reporter in 1925, he was quoted as saying, "Yes, Sirree, I'm the only river captain alive in this diggin's."

He was 72 years old at that time, and could have passed easily for 50. Described as being tall, broad-shouldered, keen-eyed and interesting, his was a personality that anyone might admire. Hale and hearty at seven-score years, he had a booming voice that still spoke with authority.

Hall started working on the river in 1861, at the tender age of 8 years, on his father's boat, the Anna Belle, which was a freight boat that ran from Vincennes to Terre Haute.

Young Emmett had the job of washing dishes, but had dreams of someday following in his father's footsteps and being a river captain.

He also worked on the Reindeer, Young America, Elk, Peter J. Clarke, H.O. Beam, Prairie City, Bellefontaine and Belgrade boats.

According to Hall, the best boat that was ever up the Wabash was the old Romeo. She belonged to Capt. Uriah Shumaker, father of Terre Haute resident Samuel Shumaker.

It was built before 1858, because there is a picture of the steamboat Romeo leaving the foot of Walnut Street, here in Terre Haute in June 1858, with a Sunday-school excursion.

According to records, the old Romeo was carrying freight and passengers between Terre Haute and Covington in 1867.

Hall became the proud captain of the newer Romeo, 130 feet long, 30 feet wide, and built in 1885 at a cost of over $15,000, a stupendous sum to spend on a steamboat at that time. The boat had 38 state rooms and a full cabin. People up and down the Wabash River considered it the most wonderful boat.

Theater and dancing parties were held on the boat, and people came from Vincennes to Terre Haute on the railroad in order to take the boat from here back to Vincennes for $4.

Sometimes as many as 65 landings were made between Terre Haute and Vincennes, including Russelville, Merom and Hutsonville. In the winter, many times the river would freeze up, and the crew would camp on the river bank until the river was again navigable.

In the winter of 1885, the boat left Vincennes at 9 a.m., landed in Terre Haute at sundown, and as the next day was New Year's, an all-night dance was staged.

The Romeo was so well known for its pleasure excursions that when the boat pulled in at Terre Haute some 2,000 people were on the bank to see her.

The old Romeo burned on the Yazoo River in Mississippi in 1888. The last boat on which Hall was captain was an excursion boat on the Ohio River in 1923.

Hall had lived in Terre Haute since 1886, coming here from Darwin, Ill. He was born in Clark County, Ill., but became a real, honest-to-goodness Hoosier.

At his last interview, Hall was quoted as saying, "It makes me hot to look at the foot of Ohio Street and see that boat landing, and to look at the banks of our river. What do you suppose tourists think when they see the banks of the Wabash as they are, when they expect to see it as they've heard about it in song and story?"

Hall's fondest hope was to see Dresser Drive made beautiful and the river improved as much as possible. He served on the committee for river improvements. H.E. Perry was chairman of the committee.

There have been many changes in river transportation as well as in the river itself. The first bridge at the foot of Ohio Street was provided with a swinging section on pontoons which could be opened to allow passage of steamboats.

The Terre Haute Drawbridge Co. had a lift-span which opened, but in time became useless when the channel shifted toward the eastern bank.

Looking at the present Big Four Railroad Bridge, this channel change is most evident. The position of the drawspan indicates the channel has shifted from the west to the east end of the bridge.

No provision was made in the 1904(5) bridge for the passage of steamboats. If one should whistle for the opening of the draw, it would prove very embarrassing for all concerned.

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A Clark, Dorothy

Discrepancy exists on first carriage

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Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Those of us who have read all available local history sources sometimes get confused with discrepancies in dates, etc. It's not an earth-shaking problem, of course, but history should be correct.

In an early newspaper, Lucius H. Scott was credited with bringing the first carriage to Terre Haute. This statement later was corrected by saying that William C. Linton brought the first one in 1827.

The matter was set straight by George B. Richardson, a resident of Brazil, Ind., in 1873. His father was Joseph Richardson who came with the Markle party to Fort Harrison in June 1816, 11 years before Linton's carriage arrived.

The carriage was used frequently by the officers of the fort and their ladies in taking rides over the smooth, level prairie, with neither fences nor roads to disturb their course.

George B. Richardson was 12 years old when he arrived at Fort Harrison with his family and the Markle party. He had a distinct recollection of a fine carriage with calash top, and silver-mounted harness to match.

On one occasion, in attempting to cross Honey Creek (no road work had been done yet), the carriage capsized in the creek, the top broke in pieces, and the occupants got a good wetting.

The carriage never was repaired, as there were no mechanics here at that early time capable of making such repairs. This carriage was manufactured in Connecticut and brought out to western New York where it was purchased by Joseph Richardson.

It was taken over the Allegheney Mountains to the headwaters of the Allegheney River, and brought by water down that stream and down the Ohio River to the mouth of the Wabash, and upriver to Fort Harrison in the family emigrant boat.

The boat was built at Olean, N.Y. The journey started May 1 and ended July 4, 1816, at Fort Harrison.

In 1891, Vigo County contained 400 square miles of prairies and timberland. The three prairies included Prairie Creek, Fort Harrison and Grand Prairie.

At one time all the commerce of the portion of the state through which the Wabash River runs was carried on the river. Fleets of the largest easily ascended to Terre Haute.

All transportation to this part of the world was by way of the Wabash River in canoes, pirogues, keelboats, flatboats and rafts.

The first steamboat to ascend the Wabash and pass through Vigo County was the Florence in the spring of 1822 (or 1823 or 1824 according to the source). In the spring of 1825, the Play Boy discharged its merchandise at the foot of Main Street.

From this time on, people here learned to depend on needed supplies carried on the steamboats that began to arrive regularly.

Where was the old Yellow Bridge across Lost Creek, which was built by the federal government?

It was built on the old National Road east of the city limits about where 19th and Wabash is now.

This was a double bridge built almost entirely of wood. The frame was held together with wooden pins. The floor was held down with stringers secured with wooden pins. The only bits of iron in the structure was the nails in the roof and weatherboard on the sides.

Where was the old silk worm house located? It stood at the northwest corner of Sixth and Eagle streets.

The first poor house in Vigo County was built in 1853. It had six rooms, with a hall running through the center. William L. Weeks was in charge of the paupers, and charged with feeding and clothing them for $500 per year.

Early tavern prices then were: night's lodging, 12½ cents; meal, 25 cents; half-pint whiskey, 12½ cents; night's lodging for horse and his feed, 25 cents. Add the 50-cent charge for the man to his transportation expenses, and the total was 75 cents a night. The whiskey was optional.

The old Pork House Theater was located on the west side of the alley on the south side of Mulberry Street between Second and Third streets.

The first Terre Haute orchestra, composed of two instruments, was Gregg & Glazier.

Sibleytown was located at Third Street and the Vandalia Railroad tracks, running east to Fifth Street, north to Locust, west to Third, and south to the railroad tracks.

After the Wabash & Erie Canal was built across town, just where the Vandalia tracks are located, all that part of Terre Haute north of the canal was known as "Sibleytown."

There's always so much more to learn about local history, isn't there?

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*Clark, Dorothy (+)

Railroads kept Terre Haute booming

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Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The fact that the first canal boat to reach Evansville on the Wabash & Erie Canal from Lake Erie arrived at its destination about a week before the opening of the Union Station illustrates the temporary overlapping of these two methods of transportation.

The first railroad track laid in Indiana (1834) was a mile section near Shelbyville on a projected Lawrenceburg & Indianapolis line. A car operated by horsepower was run on it, primarily for exhibition purposes. It was not extended and should not be confused with the railroad built in the early 1850s.

The latter was constructed under several charters. The Rushville & Lawrenceburg was incorporated in 1849 to build a line by way of Greensburg. By an act of Jan. 4, 1850, the Shelbyville & Indianapolis Railroad Co. was chartered, and the name of the Rushville & Lawrenceburg was changed to Lawrenceburg & Upper Mississippi. These roads finally consolidated to form the Indianapolis & Cincinnati.

In 1850, the Lawrenceburg & Upper Mississippi was proposing to build its main line west from Greensburg through Edinburgh and Martinsville to Terre Haute with branch lines to Columbus and to Shelbyville and Indianapolis. The directors were putting all their efforts on the line through Shelbyville to Indianapolis, while the Greensburg & Terre Haute line remained a railroad on paper.

While the river cities were struggling for the trade of central Indiana, work was being done in other parts of the state that eventually had a decided effect on the results.

The Terre Haute & Richmond Railroad Co. was charted Jan. 26, 1847, to build a railroad between those two places by way of Indianapolis.

By an act of the Legislature, approved Jan. 20, 1851, the original company was succeeded by two companies, one of which, retaining the original name, was to construct the line between Terre Haute and Indianapolis. The other company, the Indiana Central, was to build the line between Richmond and Indianapolis.

The first company frequently was referred to as the Terre Haute & Indianapolis, but the name was not officially changed until 1865.

On June 13, 1850, the editor of an Indianapolis newspaper wrote: "We were startled, the other day, by the sound of the steam cars rolling over the Terre Haute Road through the southwest part of our city, two or three squares south of the State House. The steam cars are now running as far as White River, conveying materials for the road."

On May 27, 1851, an item in the Terre Haute Journal stated: "the iron for the Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad is arriving. The steamer Bay State came up yesterday morning with a full cargo of this article; as did also the Lewis Wetzel yesterday afternoon."

On June 10, 1851, it was reported that "two locomotives for the T.H. & I Railroad came up on the Madison Road to this city (Indianapolis) on last Friday. They were elegantly finished, and display more taste on the part of the builders for gracefulness and beauty than any locomotive we ever saw before. They are entirely new, and are from the Boston Locomotive Works."

Terre Haute must have been booming at this period, for the Wabash & Erie Canal had been completed to this point in October 1849.

A former resident of Terre Haute wrote in November 1849 that, "The Wabash & Erie Canal is at length finished to Terre Haute. The boats arrived on Thursday last from Toledo, with gentlemen on board . . . The good people of Terre Haute rejoiced exceedingly, fired big guns, and gave a glorious dinner to the company on board the boats.

"Terre Haute, the most beautifully situated town in this State, and perhaps in the whole West, will now go ahead rapidly . . ."

It should be noted that the partially completed roads centering at Indianapolis were acting as feeders for the Madison Road, a tremendously prosperous enterprise. Its president, John Brough, was correspondingly arrogant.

When asked to help a smaller line, Brough replied that "the Madison Road cannot father all the paupers in the country." That line is now the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The story of Madison would doubtless have been far different had Brough accepted this offer.

Chauncey Rose, president of the Terre Haute road, about the same time proposed that the Madison Road should lease his line, and received the same answer.

Rose replied with appropriate profanity that they would soon see which was going to be the pauper road. In a few years, the Madison Road was in financial straits.

Railroad building continued at a rapid pace. A time card of 1852 shows that the Terre Haute road had been completed. The trip to Indianapolis took 4½ hours, and the fare was $2. Five hours to Madison cost $2.50.

On Sept. 28, 1853, the great Union Passenger Depot was completed and opened for business. The name is interesting. "Depot" is a French word signifying a town or place where goods are lodged for safe keeping or for re-shipment. Many believe it should have been called Union Station or Union Passenger Station.

It was considered to be a slur on humanity to speak of this building as a place where so many men, women and children were unloaded out of one car and loaded into another or hauled off to hotels. One even suggested it should be called the Grand Railroad Rendezvous.

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Railroad memories

Photographs track history of steam engines in Wabash Valley

Clark, Dorothy
TS JUN 27 1993

Historically speaking

Clark retired as the Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

In the collection of old photographs of railroad history given to the museum files were photos of steam engines, depots, engineers, brakemen and all the men who served the earlier railroad lines of the area.

The story of "Old Dutch Andy," as told by his son, along with the excellent photos of the Vandalia Railroad were of great interest to railroad buffs.

Old Dutch Andy was born at Wheaton, Ill., on April 6, 1854. The Ospring family migrated from Wurtsburgh, Austria, to Teutopolis, Ill., just as the Vandalia Railroad was being built.

Andy got a job carrying water in 1867, went to firing in 1875, was promoted to engineer in 1878, and died at the age of 70 years, pulling Pennsylvania Nos. 30 and 31.

His son, "Young Dutch Andy," was born Aug. 7, 1888, in Effingham, Ill., went to firing in 1906, was promoted to engineer in 1913, and quit railroading in 1921.

In the early part of 1877, the management of the eastern railroads announced a new pay schedule, a reduction of 10 percent in wages to take effect on July 1, 1877.

The railroad brotherhoods and unions were just getting started, with only a few lodges in existence. They had nothing to do with the great railroad strike at Pittsburgh on June 19, 1877, the turning point in railroad relations.

Included in this photo collection were six rare photos of the destruction caused by this strike and a full description of what happened.

About 1903, the small Atlantic type engines were the first to arrive on the Vandalia Railroad. They were used to handle the traffic involving the St. Louis World's Fair. Dutch Andy ran Engine No. 22, Terre Haute to St. Louis Depot, on fast time special against the Big Four for the mail contract in 1905.

Terre Haute to St. Louis, start to stop, was 177 miles in 156 minutes, including one stop of five minutes at Effingham for water and oiling; all trains cleared 30 minutes. All switches were spiked, watchmen were at every crossing, and only officials of the road and the train crews rode the four-car train with Ben McKeen's private car on the back.

Great crowds were at every station to see this fast run. Otto Wormley was the fireman. Bulletins had been posted for more than a week informing the public of this run. Engine No. 22 was being run on No. 12 and No. 21 by Dutch Andy with this fast run in mind. This was the fastest time ever made with a steam engine on the Vandalia Railroad.

Another photo made in 1885 shows a typical local freight train of those days. All Vandalia engines used capstacks, all were coal burners, even from the start, but some wood-burners did run until they could be converted.

The photo of the pioneer locomotive known as No. 41 was typical of the first engine to run on the St. Louis, Vandalia & Terre Haute. The completion of the Eads Bridge was a big help to all railroads in Illinois. At this time, Old Dutch Andy was hostling at Effingham, but he was firing and running extra, and in 1878 was given his first regular engine.

Engine No. 41 was operated on the Vandalia Railroad and pulled the first train across the Eads Bridge on June 9, 1874. One photo shows Frank Engevine, foreman of the van shops at East St. Louis, on the platform of the coach. On his left is Dan Deveaux, car inspector. Engineer Charles Sandborn is in the cab window. L.M. Hough, better known as Senator Hough, was conductor, and Arthur Miller was brakeman.

One photo shows all the Vandalia R.R. Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers taken at Terre Haute about 1904. Another shows Vandalia engineers who shipped out of the old roundhouse at 10th and Chestnut streets back in 1876.

Three of the men are unknown. Those identified were: Clay Taylor, John McKeever, master mechanic William Riley, William Morgan, John Buckley, George Irwin, Oscar Rankin, William Dodson, William Sherburne, Edward Miller, Nicholas Dodson, machinist James Cadden, John Collins, Asa Sherburne, John Sachs, John Heustis, Otto Austermiller, Jacob Sachs, Squire Sherburne, William Van Cleve, Joseph McKinney and Charles Butter, roundhouse foreman.

In June 1886, the Grover Cleveland wedding train special reached the Vandalia Railroad at Indianapolis. This engine ran from Indy to Terre Haute.

Pat Dailey was the engineer from Indy to Terre Haute over the T.H. & I. Then "Baldie" Idler ran the engine from Terre Haute to Effingham, over the St. Louis, Vandalia & Terre Haute. Old Dutch Andy handled the same train as engineer from Effingham east.

The Vandalia lines Engine No. 2 was road class VA-3, built by the Pittsburgh Locomotive Works in October 1893. In 1905 it became Vandalia No. 203 and was presumably scrapped before the T.H. & I. became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Young Dutch Andy fired Engine No. 203 at Terre Haute in August 1906, before she was scrapped here in 1908.

One photo shows the Union Station at Indy taken on a Sunday morning in 1909. Another is the Presidential Special dressed up for Grover Cleveland with his portrait adorning the smoke box front.

The early days of railroading continue to fascinate many people.

1994

Few cars on streets in early 1900s

JAN 16 1994

Clark, Dorothy

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Back in 1903, the Terre Haute Gazette decided to make a survey to find out how many autos there were in our city. A new vehicle ordinance was scheduled to go into effect on Feb. 15, but the city fathers were beginning to realize they were neglecting the 25 horseless carriages using the streets of Terre Haute. These were not taxed as yet in 1903.

The year before, residents were required to buy oblong brass tags for vehicles at $1 and $2, and aluminum bands for bicycles. The next year, people turned in the old tags when they bought their new license tags. The old brass brought 7 cents per pound, while the old aluminum brought 20 cents per pound.

The Gazette asked Ambrose Chaney of the Chaney Auto Co. how many autos there were in the city, and he gave the total as 21, at that time, but he had orders "present and prospective for several more" and would select the styles for the buyers when he attended the great world's bicycle show in Chicago in February 1903.

Chaney and J.S. Cox, president of the Chaney Auto Co., went to Chicago for several days to "select the best machines" for their local customers.

In storage at the Chaney Auto Co., located at 23 S. Seventh St., were autos belonging to Dr. Schell, Dr. Willien, Dr. Wyeth, L.J. Cox, John S. Cox (who owned three), Fred Merideth, Carl Stahl and the Chaney Co.'s wagonette, 10 autos in all.

In other locations around town were autos belonging to Logan Hughes, Geo. C. Rossell, Dr. Joseph Weinstein, C.A. Urban, Bruce Failey, Dr. Smith, Frank Moore, Frank Hulman, Mr. Conover, Marion Huestis and Dr. Wiedemann, 21 in all. Two of these vehicles were made by the owners.

Asked what he thought of the effect of the probable big sales of autos on bicycles, Mr. Chaney replied: "I do not think it will have any effect. The bicycle is as stable as the umbrella. No one can afford to be without a wheel especially as they are so good and so cheap."

"I will continue to handle bicycles and motorcycles," he said, "only on a larger scale, and will make repairs and furnish supplies and parts. A specialty will be made of vulcanizing, which we do as well as the best of the big factories, without delay and the expense of expressage."

Asked when he would get into his new quarters, Mr. Chaney replied: "That's hard to say, but if Contractor Kintz is permitted by the weather to push the work as he is doing it now, we should be in within a month."

Ambrose Chaney, Dealer in Bicycles, Sundries and Repairing, also Manufacturer of the Chaney Fuel Oil Burner, was at 925 Wabash Ave., but in 1903 the city directory shows the location still as 23 S. Seventh St.

1903 was the year the first Overland automobile was completed in the loft of a buggy-wheel factory in Terre Haute. Called the "Runabout," this first Overland was powered with a one-cylinder engine and had a solid oak frame. It was manufactured at the Standard Wheel Works in Terre Haute in buildings at 13th and Plum streets. The office was at 671 Ohio St.

This first car was a product of the Overland Motor Car Co., which subsequently became the Willys-Overland Co., after the late John North Willys, a bicycle salesman and Overland distributor of Elmira, N.Y., took it over in 1907 to save a $10,000 investment he had in the firm. Willys became president, treasurer, sales manager and purchasing agent.

Besides the Overland "Runabout," the company's first year also saw production of what was called a "Parcel Delivery Machine."

According to Charlie Weaver, of Winston-Salem, N.C., the national director of the Willys-Overland-Knight Registry, the actual work on the first car was done by Claude E. Cox, Arthur Paige, Frank Higby, Edward B. Mull and Edward McNutt.

The name "Overland" was provided by Katherine Sendelbach, a daughter of the vice-president of Standard Wheel Co.

This writer would be interested in hearing from anyone who may have information about the car, the people who built it, or who might have photos of the car or the men who built it.

The manufacturing facilities of the Overland Automobile Co. a Division of Standard Wheel, was moved from Terre Haute to Indianapolis in late 1905 or 1906.

At the beginning of World War I, the plant was moved to Toledo, Ohio, as the Willys-Overland Motors Inc. It was announced at the 50-year anniversary celebration that the company had one of the first plans for the purchase of cars on the installment plan, and who said Terre Haute wasn't ahead of its time?

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★Clark, Dorothy (t) ★[redacted]

Florence docked at city in 1820s

The first steamboat arrived in Terre Haute sometime between 1822 and 1825, according to the old newspaper or history book you're consulting at the time. Everyone agrees her name was Florence.

She landed at the old boatyard south of the foot of Oak Street. Of course, the whole town went to see her, along with all the countryside that could possibly get there.

Steamboats always were welcomed by firing the old cannon — a dangerous business. The old cannon was an institution. It had no carriage and was elevated by placing a wooden log under it near the muzzle.

James Hanna, a poor jolly fellow, acted as artilleryman. Every time he discharged it, he would spin a long yarn about what he had seen while "in the service."

On the Fourth of July the old cannon was honored with a pair of cart wheels. Before the Glorious Fourth arrived, the people of Clinton would manage to steal the cannon, compelling the Terre Haute residents to steal it back again, which they always did, being adept in that type of activity. But the Clintonians stole it once too often, for it burst in their hands. No serious casualties.

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Before the days of steamboats, goods were brought overland in wagons (mostly dry goods) and by keelboats, which came upriver in summertime when the water was low, propelled by men with poles.

These men were a particularly rough set, and the citizens of the town had very little communication with them.

Samuel Barnes Gookins, a prominent attorney, died June 14, 1880, in Terre Haute. He was born in Vermont in 1809, and came to Fort Harrison and Terre Haute in 1821 from New York by the northern route.

He and his party took passage at Sackett's Harbor on a steamboat. They landed at Lewiston, went around Niagara Falls by wagon, then to Buffalo by open boat, to Detroit by schooner, to Fort Meigs at the head of Maumee Bay by another schooner, to Fort Wayne by canoe, across the portage drawing their canoes by oxen to Little River, and down that river to the Wabash.

It was June, and the water in the river was low. They had no pilot, and were not acquainted with the currents. One day they made only about five miles, and went aground. Going ashore, they cut a hickory sapling, split it, peeled off the bark, and laying the flat side downward mounted the canoe upon it, and shoved her over into deeper water.

In the swift current, young Gookins was at the bow with a setting pole, to keep her from striking upon the rocks, of which the river was full, while the other brother acted as pilot at the stern.

One late afternoon they were caught aground and lay out in the middle of the stream all night. The next night they landed early, not far from where Logansport is now. Here they discovered rattlesnakes. They managed to kill three before setting afloat again.

The Indians still occupied all the country, the only occupants except a few traders. The first settler they found was on the north side of the river, nearly opposite the mouth of Wild Cat. The next settler was Filson, afterwards the keeper of Filson Ferry, some two or three miles above the present site of Montezuma.

They went ashore where Lafayette is now. The Indians were friendly, wanting to trade, offering to exchange their wild game for "corn meal," an article always in demand with them.

On the 18th day of June 1823, the Gookins party landed at Fort Harrison, looked over the place, and again "took water" and went down river to Terre Haute, having made the trip in six weeks and two days.

They mentioned finding trading posts for the Indians above Huntington, at the mouth of the Mississinewa and Fort Harrison, as well as at the Indian village on the river bank at Terre Haute.

In 1827, S.B. Gookins took the position of editor of the Western Register. Later he became a lawyer and a prominent citizen of Terre Haute.

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Balloon flight popular in 1800s

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Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

An American by birth, Dr. John Jeffries, the early aeronaut who first crossed the English Channel, was an Englishman. Born in 1744, Jeffries graduated with honors from Harvard in 1763.

A physician and scientist, he began the practice of medicine in 1766 but went to England to study further. He returned to Boston after receiving a medical degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1769.

During the Revolutionary War he was a Loyalist and became Surgeon-Major in the British Army. After the war he was a very successful physician at London until his return to Boston in 1789.

Jeffries became interested in aerial flight in hot-air balloons during his residence in England and made the first crossing on Jan. 7, 1785, in a balloon from Dover, England, to the coast of France, an endeavor that was believed impossible at that time. He was accompanied by the famous French balloonist, J. Pierre Blanchard.

A century later, balloon ascensions were still popular all over the United States. Here in the Wabash Valley, every celebration, including county fairs, advertised the hot-air balloonist, high point of the day's celebration.

A famous aeronaut, Professor Luther Dennis, appeared in the Wabash Valley many times. He died at Franklin in 1944. He appeared at Sullivan in 1889. The large canvas balloon used to be inflated in the northeast corner of the courthouse park, and on the corner, then vacant, where the Lyric Theater was built.

A long furnace was dug in the ground, then covered with old tin and dirt. A large flue or pipe was placed at the end. The gas or hot air was created in the long furnace by filling it with pine boxes and other kindling, then doused with kerosene.

After the collapsible canvas balloon was placed over the flue, the fire was lighted and the filling process was carefully directed by the aeronaut and his assistants.

The inflated balloon was held down by ropes, and the parachute fastened to the end of the balloon had a trapeze suspended at the end of the canvas parachute.

When the signal was given to release the balloon, the skilled flyer took his seat on the rod of the trapeze as the balloon left the ground. The rope holding the parachute to the balloon was released or cut by the aeronaut as soon as it had soared to sufficient height.

The crowd was always thrilled by the free fall of the parachute and its passenger several feet before it opened, carrying the flyer safely to the ground. A weight on top of the balloon after the parachute was cut caused the balloon to fall like a rag. The flyer usually landed at the edge of town, with the balloon falling nearby.

Other balloon enthusiasts in the Sullivan area were Dave Kendrick, Lynn Taylor, Vern "Dock" Ross, and a fellow named Hackett, said to have been a student of Dennis'.

Taylor constructed a balloon out of old awnings and canvas, and after rigging it, went to Giles pasture just northwest of town, and with the help of other amateur balloonists, made a furnace and inflated his balloon.

In attempting the ascension, the balloon failed to rise high enough for a parachute jump by the flyer, who was bruised considerably when he landed on top of a large stock barn in the pasture.

Dock Ross recalled an ascension at Oaktown in which his job was to go inside the balloon as it was being filled with hot air and watch for sparks that might set fire to the canvas. Dock was nearly suffocated and was rescued when he became smoke-blackened and eyes were full of soot.

Merom old-timers could recall other aerial events in the Wabash Valley and a near tragedy at Merom. Many years ago an event on the bluffs of Merom offered the unusual attraction of a woman suspended by her hair, riding a cable suspended from the bluff to the Illinois side of the Wabash river.

It seems the cable was not stretched tight enough, and in the descent on the pulley attached to the cable, the weight of her body pulled so strongly on the rope that she landed in the river instead of the Illinois bank. She was rescued and returned to safety by men in a skiff.

The first airplane flight ever attempted in Sullivan County was performed in front of a large crowd at Coffman's Park before 1904. The machine was only able to rise some 20 feet in the air. The "aviator" managed to clear a high board fence on the south side of the park, and the flyer and his plane landed on a shed just outside the park.

Earlier, a stunt flyer at the Merom Bluff Chautauqua managed to gain sufficient momentum in his airplane to get airborne and sustain flight across the Wabash and land on the Illinois side not far from the river.

From 1900-1905, there were annual street fairs on the public square at Sullivan. The star attraction of each six-day fair was the diving act of Marvelous Marsh. This act was performed daily and was most thrilling.

A high runway was erected near the center of the north side of the public square, possibly 100 feet high. Marsh would dash down this steep incline on a bicycle, and under great velocity, would leave the cycle near the end of the incline.

The wheel would drop into a canvas spread to receive it, and then Marsh would sail up through the air like a bird. When squarely over a tank of water, his body would turn, and he would dive feet first into the tank. Marsh appeared here for some years, before losing his life.

Community Affairs File

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Community Affairs File

Trains, steamboats and automobiles

New forms of transportation weave fabric of American life together

TS DEC 04 1994

Note: This week's column completes the three-part saga of early transportation.

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Barges on the canals were pulled by mules and horses. These canal boats were similar to the keel boats that plied the rivers. Passengers rode on packet boats with separate cabins for men and women.

The pulling animals walked the tow path on one side of the canal, pulling the boats about three miles an hour. Canal travel was slow, but it was still faster and cheaper that overland travel.

Towns competed for the obvious wealth that would result from becoming terminal points of the canals, and some cities flourished overnight as commerce and trade with the East doubled and tripled with the opening of the canal system.

The biggest bottlenecks on the canal system occurred at the locks where upstream boats were lifted to higher water and downstream boats were lowered.

Often, many boats were stacked up in the canals waiting their turn through the locks. Maintenance of the water highways was expensive, and in addition they had to close during the winter when the water froze.

By 1850, the canals were on the verge of being doomed by the coming of railroads. For their short but relatively successful life, however, the canals did manage to make Indiana and Illinois prosperous and attractive to the new settlers. Communities along the canals became active, busy towns, many of them seats of county government. Civilization had at last rubbed off the crudity and hardships of pioneer life.

Only a few years prior to the opening of the canal system, the overland routes were proving inadequate to the increasing needs of new settlers. The East had the goods the settlers needed, and the settlers had products for the ever-populous Eastern towns. Everyone wanted better means of travel and shipping, and they were determined to get it.

The first steamboats were nothing short of startling to those who first saw them. However, both passengers and shippers were wary of the boiler exploding, so the new methods of river transportation failed to be accepted until 1816, when a steamer made a successful round trip between Louisville, Ky., and New Orleans. While 25 days were required for the first upstream trip, by 1840 the time for the same trip had been cut to only five days.

The next new form of transportation was the railroad. Early rail cars were pulled by horses. Steam locomotives, built in England, were imported and saw limited service because they were not designed for the twisting, hilly runs of the American countryside.

Soon, American-built locomotives, with coupled wheels and swiveled front trucks, took command; dozens of railroad companies started up in the East.

In the early days of railroads, small stretches of track connected towns, and passengers changed or rode connecting stage coaches to go any distance.

By 1857, railroad passengers could go through from the East all the way to St. Louis. Not, however, on the same train. Each road had built its track to a different gauge, matching the locomotives it had. Changing trains was common and inconvenient, but still a vast improvement over the rough and bruising stage coaches.

Soon, however, adequate headlamp and sleeping cars made schedules possible that were unequaled by any other means of transportation. The railroads were moving more people and more goods than they had ever accomplished before.

Terre Haute soon became the center of several railroad lines, witnessing a rich and exciting half-century as the railroads pushed west to California and wove the country into a common land. Goods and people now moved with convenience and freedom.

For nearly a hundred years, the silver rails would dominate the transportation arteries of the nation, but the train was not to be the final chapter in the story of transportation.

As the 19th century closed, two events were taking place that were to shape a new century.

One was happening in a small coal shed behind a two-story house at Detroit. There, in 1893, a young engineer from the Edison Electric Plant by the name of Henry Ford was experimenting with gasoline engines and the early automobile. By 1896, he had built his first auto and, a few years later, established the Ford Motor Co.

For a decade, the automobile was more to be jeered than cheered. It was a rich man's plaything that scared horses, belched smoke and often broke down.

Suddenly, the auto caught the fancy and favor of America. The Model T was manufactured by new industrial techniques that made its price low enough for many. It soon became an inseparable part of American life.

Unlike the train that had to have tracks on which to ride over land, the irrepressible auto pushed off into the back roads made by and for horses and wagons.

Pioneer products of the auto industry were plagued by sudden failures, flat tires, boiling radiators, and mud. A sudden summer shower would turn a dirt road into an impassible quagmire. Many a farmer, smiling at the strange paradox, would hitch up his team of horses to salvage a "horseless" carriage from a mudhole that would have been no problem for a horse-drawn rig.

America, however, was falling in love with the automobile, and it wouldn't be long before better roads and better autos would take America from the wooden wheels of yesterday to the inflated rubber wheels, and then modern-day tires of today.

The other event mentioned was happening at Dayton, Ohio. Two brothers, Orville and Wilbur Wright, were busy inventing the airplane. That, however, is a story of today and not yesterday.

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* Clark, Dorothy + * Railroads (Ind)

Railroads celebrate 160 years

Ts DEC 18 1994

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Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Railroading in Indiana celebrates its 160th anniversary this year. The first was built in 1834 near Shelbyville. This pioneer railroad was only a mile and a quarter long, without any steam motive power, but it was the first.

During the brief span of two months, it was built by common labor at a cost of $3,524.47½. It had two bridges, a curve, a cut 5 feet deep and a fill 5½ feet high. What more has any railroad today on its right of way?

The first venture for a railroad operated by steam locomotives in the state was the Madison road, begun as a part of the internal improvement movement in Indiana, and as a part of the enthusiasm of the day the Terre Haute & Richmond Railroad was chartered, Jan. 26, 1847, to build a railroad across the state.

The survey from Terre Haute to Indianapolis was completed in December 1847 by the route later used by the Indianapolis & St. Louis Railroad, later the Big Four; and General Morris, who was dissatisfied with the route, started the southern survey, which was adopted for construction in the month following.

Financing of the work was left to Chauncey Rose, one of the principal owners of the company; and a deciding factor of the route chosen was always the amount of stock that could be sold along the proposed line. While the terminals of the line were fixed, the owners might be persuaded to build a few miles out of the way if sufficient inducement was in sight.

Because of this feature of early railroading, the original act of incorporating the company was amended in February 1848 to allow the railroad to pass within a half mile of the courthouse at Greencastle instead of making the town a point on the line. In case the builders decided not to pass through Danville, Ind., the stockholders there might cancel their subscriptions.

It should be recalled that there were no other towns on the route between Terre Haute and Indianapolis except Plainfield, and that all the stations now on the line as well as many others that have vanished from it, were created because of the railroad and its operation.

With the final selection of the route and the right of way secured, advertisements appeared in the newspapers announcing opening of bids at Terre Haute on Dec. 11, 1848, for grubbing, grading and bridging the 33 miles east of Terre Haute, and the construction of the piers and abutments for a bridge over the Walnut fork of Eel River near Reel's Mill.

It was understood that "proposals to take part stock in payment will have preference." Newspapers of Dec. 23, 1848, announced that contracts had been let on Dec. 20, and that all called for about 30 percent in stock.

Considering the nature of the country, its dense forests and the amount of grading, the small bridges and culverts to be built and the lack of modern machinery, it is no surprise the work took a long time to finish.

More than once work was stopped to allow financing to catch up with the laborers' wages. A special act of the Legislature permitted the railroad to issue bonds so sufficient funds could be had to insure completion.

Much of the rock work along the line was quarried close by the line of the railroad. What little cutting through rock had to be done was by main strength of pick and bar rather than blasting.

Held up at Croy's Creek east of Harmony by the immense fill and the equally difficult rock-cut to the east over which the National Road passed by an overhead bridge at the close of the work, it was only by the help of the adjoining land owner, for whom McKinley's tavern was named, that the work proceeded. McKinley took over the contract for stock in the railroad.

Adjoining farmers and their teams furnished much of the labor, along with the great influx of Irish immigrant workers. Many farmers along the railroad boarded the help, and from this source, small as it was, obtained the cash needed to carry on their own work on the road for which they often received nothing from the contractor but stock he had been obliged to take for his pay.

Some money was taken in by the railroad as the work progressed toward completion, especially after the rails were laid and traffic could be handled as far as possible.

In the fall of 1851, traffic between the ends of the lines (work being done from Indianapolis as well as from Terre Haute) was handled by a stage line, and a certain amount of revenue was thus available.

Completion of the work was marked by the laying of the last rail on Feb. 14, 1852, if we accept the statement of the Wabash Express of Feb. 18, although the Terre Haute Journal on the 20th quotes the State Journal of Indianapolis under date of Jan. 17, "a train passed the whole length of the railroad yesterday."

All things begin as small units and expand into larger ones if they grow, and it is interesting to note the smallness in every way of that pioneer railroad that first came into Terre Haute..One of the earliest locomotives, the Boston, weighed a little under 12 tons. A total capacity of 5 to 8 tons for a freight car was not unusual.

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